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ABSTRACT

This document describes several outreach projects in Hull, England, developed by a head teacher of a state nursery school who believed that parents would feel more comfortable with preschool staff and activities if facilities were provided for very young children. The first section describes the innovation of a mother-toddler club in North Hull. In 1980, when funds were needed to acquire a building, this club became the nucleus for the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre. Greater space allowed the addition of new activities, such as a pensioners' club, a toy library, and exercise and karate groups. The next two sections describe the Neighbourhood Centres Project, in which similar activities were started in two other areas of the city. Toy libraries and parent/toddler groups were organized through a play group supervisor and the head teachers of three primary schools. The last two sections discuss research providing a rationale for these projects, the roles of professionals from various social agencies in creating and maintaining them, and the current and future status of the projects. (CB)

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WORKING WITH

PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

Margaret A. Rice

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WORKING WITH PARENTS AND PROFESSIONALS

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To many individuals
who have co-operated in one way of other in the work of the project, including in particular:- Mr. Rex Stott, Senior Education Officer and members of the Support Group; Mr. Jim Bolton, Deputy Director of Education; Dr. J. Hobbs, Assistant Director, Humberside College of Higher Education; Mrs. J. Collinson, Mrs. S. Maw and Mr. C. Walker, Headteachers involved in the project; Mrs. A. Carpenter, Education Welfare Officer; Mrs. Dorothy Jacques, Stepney Lane Playgroup Supervisor and Mrs. Brenda Jackson, Under Fives Officer; Molly Jowett and Ellen Thomson for typing the transcript.

BEST COPY

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To Family and friends for tolerance and time.

Margaret A. Rice

Margaret Rice

July 1983

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SECTION I.

1. McMillan Nursery School

(i) The Priorities in 1977

As headteacher of a state nursery school on a large council estate in North Hull, I became aware of two priorities; firstly, the need for parents to be involved and welcome in the school and secondly, the need for a facility for the very young child so that through this experience, the child and parent could become more confident to utlise and understand the learning environment of the nursery school.

In 1978 in order to meet these two priorities I opened a 12 o'clock club in one of the nursery classrooms, where parents with children under three were welcome. From this beginning the Mother-Toddler Club was established and during the next two years, changed venue and time with mothers gradually taking over the leadership and control of the club. This initial development was followed in succeeding years by a regular parent's newsletter, book libraries, a toy library and finally, Pop-In sessions.

Alongside and equally important was a general attitude and acceptance of the need to provide a welcoming, relaxed atmosphere and a flexible system of attendance for parents and children. This has been fully documented in the Parental Involvement Project, McMillan Nursery School, published by Humberside County Council, 1982.

(ii) A developing philosophy of Parental Involvement within the School

Parents by helping with activities become involved, more interested in their children's work and gradually more confident in their own abilities. Relationships between any individuals take time, energy, sensitivity and an acceptance of anothers feelings and point of view.

The activities and attitudes developed in the years 1978-80 lead directly to the beginning of a relationship between myself and a group of parents. Through that relationship I became increasingly aware of the talents, interests, capabilities that could be fostered by a professional worker, like myself, within a community. If one could 'tap' the creativity of parents as a resource, they themselves could become a source of support for other parents, not only those within the school but in the neighbourhoods in which they lived.

(iii) The Situation within the School 1980

By 1980 the need to develop facilities for parents with children under three became increasingly necessary. The waiting list for the school continued to rise; a higher number of children entering the school appeared to lack stimulation; more parents appeared to be lonely or isolated; more families showed evidence of stress through separation, unemployment, illness and general stress from difficult social conditions. The Mother-Toddler Club held in my room and in the corridor of the school continued to be successful, with parent leaders taking over most of the responsibility for organisation.

In July 1980 two significant events occurred. Firstly, the evidence of increasing social pressures within the school, necessitated the closure of the Mother-Toddler Club. I felt I could not cope with the added pressure of fifteen mothers and young children with the lack of adequate facilities to maintain the club without interruption to the routines and management of the school and the needs of the 132 families already attached to the school.

Secondly, was the knowledge that buildings known as the 21st Avenue Huts were under threat of demolition. From this, the idea was born that one of these buildings could be saved for the Community, in which the McMillan Mother-Toddler Club could function, under the care and management of the mothers themselves, supported initially by myself in terms of basic organisation and application for funds.

1 Mrs. Rice: McMillan Mother/Toddler Club 1978

2 McMillan Parent/Toddler Club 1979

2. The Development of the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre Committee

(i) The Initial Phase

In September 1980 I put up notices in the school Appendix (1). These notices explained the objectives for the acquisition of a building for use by the people living in the neighbourhood. Notices were also sent to the offices of the Social Services and Health Visitors, Governors, NSPCC and Barnardo's. I had already developed strong relationships within the school and this was a natural extension of that relationship. I was aware of the need for a wider support system for such a development in the Community. The public meeting was well supported Appendix (2). The Deputy Head, Mrs S. Potts volunteered to supervise the children who came with their parents.

From this larger group came a steering group of parents and by February I had agreed to act as co-ordinator for the first phase of the development with parents, taking responsibility for the positions of treasurer, secretary and leaders of the Mother-Toddler Club Appendix (3).

We agreed to meet in the evenings in different parent's homes to discuss details of applications for funding and individual responsibilities. In January I had prepared a report which I thought could be used for application for funds. Appendix (4). This report outlined the possible development of a Centre, which we decided to call the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre. Notice was received from the Education Committee that the lease of the 21st Avenue Hut would be made available to the Neighbourhood Centre Committee, with reasonable access to the North Hull Cubs and Scouts, who were already using the building.

(ii) Application for Funding

The Committee decided to apply to the following agencies using the report I had produced outlining our aims:

Inner City Funding : Special Projects Fund
BBC Children in Need Appeal
Social Services Department
South Hunsley Spring Walk
Education Department
Inner Area Programme : Community Sector Programme
Bernard Van Leer Foundation, Holland

Over the next 18 months the results of those applications proved successful, starting with an initial grant from Hull City Council's Special Project Fund to set up the Mother-Toddler Club. The following grants were allocated:

October 1980	Hull City Council Special Projects	500
January 1981	" " " " "	500
February 1981	" " " " "	1358
March 1982	BBC Children in Need Appeal	500
" "	Social Services Department	150
81/82	South Hunsley Spring Walk	150
82/83	Inner Area Programmes 82/83	2500

In July 1982, the Van Leer Foundation gave a verbal assurance of their support with a grant of £4000. The grant was awarded to promote the wider aspects of the concept and the possible development of the concept of Neighbourhood Centres and Parent/Child activities within Hull. This has developed into the Neighbourhood Centres Project, Hull based at the Professional Centre, Humberside College of Higher Education.

Funding 1983/84

Inner Area Programme, Community Sector Programme £3500

(iii) The Beginnings

January 1982

The Neighbourhood Centre had been painted during December by Community Action (a government sponsored scheme). A carpet was installed in the Mother-Toddler room, and the first intake started on Tuesday 11th January under the care of the two mother/toddler leaders Gill Gardham and Karen Burton. Both these mothers had been members of the first mother-toddler club which I organised within the school in 1978. This is true of other members of the committee so a relationship had already been established with individuals. A different technique and way of working with them as a group had to be established and my role as co-ordinator within a community voluntary development as opposed to the role of headteacher/parent role within a statutory school situation.

(iv) The role of the co-opted members

Four people were identified as being able to offer support to the Committee during the next phase of the development. I felt there was a need to have some members who would be able to challenge my own role and expectations within the committee. Two of these became involved actively and by September 1982 it was suggested that the other two co-opted members had no real connection with the Estate and should be asked to withdraw and an interested Health Visitor, already involved in the McMillan Nursery School should be approached to join the committee. The Health Visitor, Shirley Stephenson had a wide view of the community knowledge of local families and the needs of those families.

3. Development of Groups

The details of the groups initiated were highlighted in my first report at the end of the first financial year 1982 Appendix (a).

(i) Additional Information

a. Mother-Toddler Club

From January 1982 a Tuesday morning group of 15 mothers and children used the Mother/Toddler room. Gill and Karen organised a variety of activities with sessions always ending with a sing-song and nursery rhyme session, where parents were encouraged to participate. After Easter, Gill and Karen opened a second morning club with another 15 mothers and children.

An afternoon club was started with a mother leader who had observed the morning club and expressed the wish to lead an afternoon club. Unfortunately this did not turn out well as she tended to lack confidence in helping other mothers to participate in the activities and home circumstances clashed with the time of the involvement. I offered her the opportunity to withdraw from the committee in July, which she accepted.

The two Mother-Toddler clubs continued to thrive. Gill organised a swimming trip to the local swimming baths for both groups. Some parents and children enjoyed their first experience at the baths. A picnic at a local park was also organised

Humberside College of Higher Education made a video-tape recording of the Mother-toddler club, the committee and the parents and discussion group, which has been used for many purposes. It is planned to show the video to the parents this summer, using the facility of the local Primary or Junior High School.

April 1983

The leaders are aware of the need to attract to the club the mothers having problems because of their social conditions and feel more prepared to tackle the implications of a growth in this area.

b. Pensioners Club

The pensioners mainly from the Social Services complex, called Ada Holmes Circle used the Centre one afternoon a week. The leaders, the warden of the Centre had some difficulties in establishing the group. Furniture and facilities were basic with only one toilet. We felt we could not invite too many pensioners and advertise the club until facilities could be improved. However the small group stayed together for the year. A successful Christmas Party was held with transport provided by the Social Services. I suggested the club should close during the winter due to lack of facilities and the problems of the walk to the centre.

A North Hull Community Care Association has since been formed and a member of the Association has joined the committee, so that a club can be re-developed as facilities improve.

c. Keep Fit

Rose Mahoney, Treasurer of the committee offered to introduce a keep-fit class and started in September. This proved so successful that she opened a second class on another night.

d. Community Toy Library

The Toy Library was seen as an opportunity for any mother with young children from babies to 3 years being able to borrow a toy and take it home. It was seen as the first link from the home into the Mother-Toddler club into the Nursery School. The leaders, Joan Jennison and I worked out a system for the recording of toys borrowed and attractive cards were produced. The library has not been very successful as yet and we moved it to a borrowing situation at the end of the Mother-Toddler club sessions.

I am sure there is a need for such an activity but it will need the time and approach to be restructured. The leader is still keen and it has been agreed to re-open when the group has moved into its new premises, next to the McMillan Nursery School.

e. Sue's Club

Started on November 15th and seen to be a small supportive group with an interest directed towards learning creative skills, especially sewing.

f. Dad's Club

It was decided to delay this club due to lack of possible leaders, difficulties with the buildings and the amount of activities already initiated.

g. Karate Club

Introduced January 1983, run by two volunteers. Very successful with 30 members of mixed ages.

Sue's Club 1983. North Hull Neighbourhood Centre.

4. The Present Position : June 1983

Progress had been steady. The Committee had grown in strength in our ability to plan, understand funding and still felt committed to the ideals of the Centre and to each other as people concerned with developing a community facility. Mrs S. Wiley, the Parent Governor had become more involved during the preceding months and had volunteered to take over my role as co-ordinator.

September 1982 saw a difficult time for the Committee Appendix (6). A letter had been received from the Architect that the flooring of the 21st Avenue Hut was rotting and was going to cost a considerable amount of money to replace. It was decided to therefore, negotiate with the Authority for the lease of an empty Horsa Hut next to the McMillan Nursery School, which was smaller but in much better condition.

Permission for this has now been approved by the Education Committee and the Neighbourhood Centre Committee are now in the position of putting in toilets and a small kitchen area, using money granted by Hull City Council, Community Sector Programme. Revenue money was transferred to capital costs and therefore can be used for building purposes. I have now withdrawn as co-ordinator. Mrs. Wiley has taken over as Chairperson; Gill Gardham has become Deputy Chairperson, Wendy Buxton and Rose Mahoney have continued as Secretary and Treasurer respectively, and a new position Minute Secretary, Joan Jennison.

Under the terms of the budget agreed with the Van Leer Foundation £500 will be allocated to the Committee for two defined reasons:

(a) to provide financial resources for trips and visits to places of interest for the mother/toddler club. The trips will be planned by the parents and account of the visits will be taken by the leaders.

(b) to provide financial resources for training, either to bring a person into the Centre or for mothers to attend courses e.g. the Pre-School Playgroups Course. This will be monitored by the Chairperson and Deputy.

North Hull Neighbourhood Centre Mother/Toddler Club Swimming Session

5. The Future : July 1983

(1) North Hull Neighbourhood Centre

The Committee have moved to another building known as the South Horse Hut, which has been allocated to the Neighbourhood Centre Committee by the Humberside Education Committee. During the summer holidays, structural alterations will be taking place, including the provision of two toilets and washing facilities. The Committee aim to re-open activities in October, including a Pop-In session for parents with young children from the neighbourhood and attending the Nursery or Primary School. A North Hull Community Care Association has recently been formed and is represented on the Centre's Committee by a member. It is hoped to re-open a Pensioners' Club in October under the control of the Community Care Association and use the facility of the adults' room in the Centre. Some equipment has already been bought for this club, including some high-backed chairs and a wheel chair. The Parent Co-ordinator of the Neighbourhood Centre Committee hopes that the Centre will soon be able to offer the opportunity for activities to be developed that will offer support to families under stress. The activities would develop through co-operation with the Social Services or Health Authority.

The Horse Hut is very close to the McMillan Nursery School so it will be possible to continue the links already established between the Neighbourhood Centre and the school. Staff from the school will be able to visit parents and toddlers in the Club and get to know them before admission into the Nursery School. Also leaders of the various clubs will have access to the resources of the school and support from Mrs. Rice and the staff.

Mrs. Rice aims to offer support to the Co-ordinator in the following ways during 1983-1984:-

(1) Continued development of the Parents' Committee, through planning, extension and improvement of activities.
(2) To examine the possibility of training, either at a College or bringing tutors into the Centre, for members of the Committee.
(3) Development of the role of co-opted members.
(4) Identify other key parents to assist at various activities so that the present leaders of the groups can pass on their skills and knowledge to other parents, who in turn may take over responsibility for a group.

(2) McMillan Nursery School

On a wider basis, Mrs. Rice intends to set up a Professional Support Group, to meet monthly to discuss common concerns facing the school and the Centre, so that knowledge and understanding of activities being undertaken by the two facilities can be complementary and seek to offer a co-ordinated service for families with young children. The needs of a family and the children within the family could therefore be considered in the light of various alternatives available within the complex, in terms of attendance at the Parent/ Toddler Club, for a term before attending McMillan Nursery School. A parent could be advised to attend the Keep Fit, Sue's Club or other activities that may offer the opportunity for the parent to join a group activity.

The proposed Support Group, co-ordinated by Mrs. Rice, would have representatives from Social Services, Health Authority, Nursery and Primary School staff, a Councillor, Governor and the Under Fives Officer. It is hoped that this group will be formed by December 1983.

Toy Library, McMillan Nursery School, 1982

COPY OF THE PUBLIC NOTICE SEPTEMBER 1980

NORTH HULL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

OBJECTIVE: To maintain the premises on 21st Avenue for re-development as a centre for use by the neighbourhood of the North Hull Estate.

AIMS:

1. To provide accommodation for a Pre-School Playgroup/ Mothers Group.
2. To provide facilities for a Mothers' Room with access to coffee and tea.
3. To make the premises available for Voluntary groups including holiday playschemes.
4. Availability to local groups for evenings - Scouts, Cubs, Woman's Groups and Pensioners.

METHODS OF APPROACH:

1. To approach Manpower Services for aid in establishing the centre and initial staffing.
2. To approach Barnado's, National Children's Home, National Children's Bureau, N.S.P.C.C. for funds to establish the Centre for a two year period from January 19^{81}.
3. To establish a committee of interested people - parents, clergy, councillors, social services, health and education.

POSSIBLE FUTURE BUILDING NEEDS AND CONCERNS:

1. Enclosed play area at the rear of the building.
2. Toilet and wash basins.
3. Heating and lighting.
4. Caretaker.
5. Arrangement for lease and care of building.

NORTH HULL NEEDS THIS CENTRE. CAN WE SAVE THIS BUILDING AND MAKE IT A VIABLE, SAFE, SELF)SUSTAINING, ATTRACTIVE PLACE FOR PEOPLE TO BE?

Margaret Rice.
Headteacher: McMillan Nursery School.
Chairman: National Children's Bureau,
Hull Group.

Appendix 2

NORTH HULL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

VOLUNTARY COMMITTEE

Wendy Buxton. 53 - 20th Avenue. Parent

Karen Burton. 16 - 21st Avenue. Parent.

Gillian Gardham, 2 - 17th Avenue. Parent.

Joan Jennison, 22 - 12th Avenue. Parent.

Michael and Elaine Robinson, 10 - 11th Avenue. Parents.

Frances Gay, 16 - 11th Avenue. Parent.

Shirley Stevenson, Orchard Park Health Centre. Health Visitor.

Janet Curl. Orchard Park Health Centre. Health Visitor.

John Garton. North Hull Social Services. Social Worker (Voluntary)

David Johnson. St. Michael's Vicarage, O.P.E.

Mrs. Hargreaves. 153 Park Avenue, Hull. School Governor.

Councillor P. Doyle. 6 Wellesley Avenue. School Governor.

Bridget Atkinson, Joy Cotterill } Dr. Barnardo's Social Workers.

Brenda Jackson. 9 Pavilion Crescent, Worthing Street, Hull. Under 5's Officer Social Services.

Sue Potts. McMillan Nursery School. Teacher.

Margaret Rice. McMillan Nursery School. Headteacher. National Children's Bureau Chairman, Hull.

Supporter Members and Organisation

Kevin Curley. Director, Hull Council Voluntary Service.

Peter Day. Lecturer in Applied Social Studies.

Margaret Parish. National Children's Home.

Norman Bailey. N.S.P.C.C.

Paula Kendrick. Pre-School Playgroup Organiser, Hull.

Colin Moss. Project Leader, Hull Family Day Centre.

Dora Williams, Mary Frennaux } North Hull Social Services.

Maggie O'Flynn. Community Action.

N.C.B.

Appendix 3

NORTH HULL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE COMMITTEE

Minutes of First Meeting held Monday 3rd November 1980

The seventeen people attending the first meeting agreed to form a Voluntary Committee. This group to be known as North Hull Neighbourhood Centre Voluntary Committee.

The problem of finance, leasing and care of the building was discussed. It was agreed that Margaret Rice should act as co-ordinator in the initial stages of the development of the Centre. The Education Department was to be approached on the question of the lease of the premises and to the possibility of the uthority taking responsibility for the heating and lighting costs for the initial year, beginning 1st April 1981.

Once the lease of the building has been confirmed, Manpower Services, through Community Action, would be involved. They would be able to provide a Project Team to clean, paint and restore the building where necessary. A Placement Team would be able to provide staff to begin a Mother-Toddler Club on two mornings a week.

Another meeting will be necessary before the end of November to elect officers and to make writtenapplication to various funding agencies.

Appendix 4

February 19th 1981

North Hull Neighbourhood Committee

Minutes of meeting held on the 19.2.81 at McMillan Nursery School.

Present: Parents: Mrs. Karen Burton, Mr. & Mrs. Butler
Governors: Mrs. Hargreaves
Social Services: John Gerton
N.S.P.C.C.: Mr. Bailey/Mr. Mills
Others: Mrs. M. Rice

Apologies from Mr. Johnson, Mrs. Kurl & Mrs. Stevenson (Health Visitors)
Wendy Buston, Brenda Jackson, Kevin Corley, Maggie Oflynn

Members had been asked to study a written proposal submitted by Margaret Rice, acting as co-ordinator of the committee. This was to form the basis of material for application for funds. The proposal outlined the possible development of the centre and costing. Mrs. Rice estimated it would cost about £600 to equip a playcentre with fifteen children as a target number for the Mother/Toddler Club, that figure includes paper and paint and general material for the year.

Mrs. Rice outlined the need to elect officers, to discuss various fund agencies to which the committee could apply. Also outlined was the role Community Action could take in terms of project placement teams.

Recommendations

(1) That the project should start in a small way, e.g. open a Mother/Toddler Club two mornings a week.
(2) That the parents should meet to discuss and elect officers and the role of various committee members,
(3) That once officers had been decided, they would go ahead and seek funds to establish a Mother/Toddler Club.
(4) Other parts of project could develop if and when funds and support developed.

February 28th 1981

Minutes of Meeting held on the 28.2.81 at the home of John and Rose Butler, 10-1st Avenue.

It was decided that Mrs. M. Rice would remain as Co-ordinator for the year 1991-1982, John and Rose Butler to be Treasurers for a year, Wendy Buxton, 53-20th Avenue to be Secretary.
Gillian Gardham, 2-17th Avenue and Karen Burton, 16-21st Avenue to be Mother/Leaders of the Mother/Toddler Club.

Description of roles

Co-ordinator: To be responsible for bringing together the various interested parties, apply for funds, co-ordinate larger meetings and parent and committee members to foster and support parents in decision making; advise Mother/Leaders on activities and development of Mother/Toddler Club.

Treasurer: To be responsible for the accounts, receiving receipts, paying bills, accounts to be audited by

Secretary: To take notes at steering committee meetings, typed out and sent to other members. Responsible for all correspondence concerning centre.

Mother/Leaders: To be responsible for the development and every day running activities of the Mother/Toddler Club, organise rota, facilities for coffee, administer waiting list and have full control of club. A small charge to be made for coffee and attendance at the club. Accounts to be kept and shown to steering committee.

Recommendations

(1) To open bank account, M. Rice and Butlers to be signatories, arrangements to be made to discuss account with manager of T.S.B. Beverley Road.
(2) To go ahead with Community Action Project and Placement team - John Butler to be link with personnel.
(3) Once lease has been assured. M. Rice to apply for funds from
    (i) Inner City Fund Hull City Council
    (ii) B.B.C. Children in Need Appeal
    (iii) Social Services Special Projects
    (iv) Bernard Leer Foundation Holland.
    Once funds are available, to send off for basic equipment - table toys, slide, paints, etc. to enable the Mother/Toddler Club hopefully to open after Easter under the direction of Gill Gardham and Karen Burton.
    Age group - 18 months to three years. 15 pence each morning. Mother/

Leaders will offer morning session for mothers with children under 18 months if the need arises.

Admission under the control of Bill Bredham.

(4) Facilities to be loaned out to local groups on application to the Committee. All requests to be sent to Wendy Buxton.

(5) Parents Committee to meet once a month to review events and make decisions etc.

Next meeting to be held March 23rd at the home of Wendy Buxton, 8.00 p.m.

Copy of First Document for Application for Funding. January 1981

The North Hull Neighbourhood Centre Project.
Hull,
North Humberside.

Co-ordinator: Margaret Rice, M.Ed. (Early Childhood)
Headteacher: McMillan Nursery School
Chairman: National Children's Bureau Hull and North Humberside.

The Committee of parents advised by professionals aims to develop a Neighbourhood Centre to provide activities and opportunities for self-development of families living in the neighbourhood.

Initially the emphasis will be in providing facilities for parents with very young children through a Mother-Toddler Club. Mother-leaders will be able to support other mothers by offering the facilities of the proposed playcentre developed within the Neighbourhood Centre. It is hoped that by belonging to such a group problems faced by individual mothers can be shared and feelings of isolation can be broken down. More complex problems can be referred to the supporting caring agencies.

The Parents' Committee will be helped to form the management team by the Co-ordinator and supporting members of the Steering Committee. It is hoped that the skills and knowledge acquired by the Parents' Committee can be passed on to other parents as the project develops and grows. It is envisaged that the Neighbourhood Centre could offer opportunities for adult literacy classes, courses on health care and child care and a meeting place for pensioners.

Please find a description of the Estate, the need for a Centre and its envisaged development and costing.

NORTH HULL ESTATE

The North Hull Estate is a large council estate in the northern part of the city of Kingston-upon-Hull. The estate is divided into 'avenues'. The houses consist mainly of terraced houses, semi-detached houses and old people's units. The majority of the houses have small gardens. A busy road, part of the Outer Ring road system, goes through the middle of the estate. There is one park, known as the Queen Elizabeth Park, with sportsfields and children's playground area.

The northern part of the estate joins another large council estate, known as 'Orchard Park Estate' where more modern housing facilities are found, including high rise flats.

Facilities on the estate

Community Centre: On the western side of the estate: offers a private playgroup (five mornings a week); various group activities including drama groups, one-parent groups etc.

Health Centre: 'Orchard Park Health Centre' houses 4 practices of General Practitioners: two Health Visitors, two Community Nurses and two School Nurses. There are also the following facilities: Dental - for physically and mentally handicapped adults and expectant mothers. Sessions daily for children. Dental hygienist for children; District Nursing Service; Child Health Clinic by Health Visitors and doctor in attendance twice weekly; Parentcraft classes; Mothers' Club and Family Planning sessions

Social Services: Situated in the middle of the estate. Under the direction of an area manager with senior practitioners and social workers. Offers general social work, support service and preventative work.

Education: One large Nursery School, known as the McMillan Nursery School; three nursery units, attached to Primary Schools, known as Court Park, Danepark and Endike. There are five Primary Schools.

NEEDS AND FACILITIES FOR PARENTS OF CHILDREN UNDER 3

There are many young parents, with young families. Many families struggle with problems with little access to any support systems. There are no facilities on this estate for parents to meet during the day or evening.

The formation of the North Hull Neighbourhood Committee

In September 1980, Mrs. M. Rice, Headteacher of the McMillan Nursery School, co-ordinated a meeting of interested people from different backgrounds to discuss the possibility of developing one of the huts on 21st Avenue as a Neighbourhood Centre. Please find names of this Voluntary Committee on the enclosed sheet.

Development of Centre.

Along 21st Avenue are three huts which have ceased to be used by the Education Authority. One is used as an Evening Playgroup Centre and Youth Club. The other two lie empty. One of these could be made into a Centre for use by the neighbourhood under the management of a local committee, with special emphasis on its use for families with young children. Daily sessions in terms of a Mother-Toddler Club could be developed, catering for mothers with children of 3 and under. Assigned mothers could act as leaders who could initiate and plan activities for the group. Therapy sessions for parents experiencing difficulties could be held, perhaps organised through Social Workers and Health Visitors. Sessions for handicapped children and those with special needs could be arranged. Social Workers from National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (N.S.P.C.C.) and Barnardo's Family Centre could visit on a formal or informal basis.

Link up with McMillan Nursery School, Fifth Avenue

The 21st Avenue hut is within a short walking distance of the school. The Local Authority Nursery School accepts children from the age of 3. There are approximately 130 children on the register, 36 - 39 children being fulltime. One-parent families, single mothers and families with 3 or more children under 5 have priority for admission. The school offers extra opportunities for parents' involvement and interest in the school, through a Mother-Toddler Club, Book Club and Toy Library. The school has strong links with Social Services and Health Authority. The school has many one-parent families, single mothers, parents experiencing difficulties with their children and children with problems. It aims to offer a welcoming, caring environment for the mother and child. A link could be forged between the school and the developing Neighbourhood Centre. Many of the children attending the school have younger siblings who would benefit by attending an organised Mother-Toddler Club.

Evening Use of the Centre

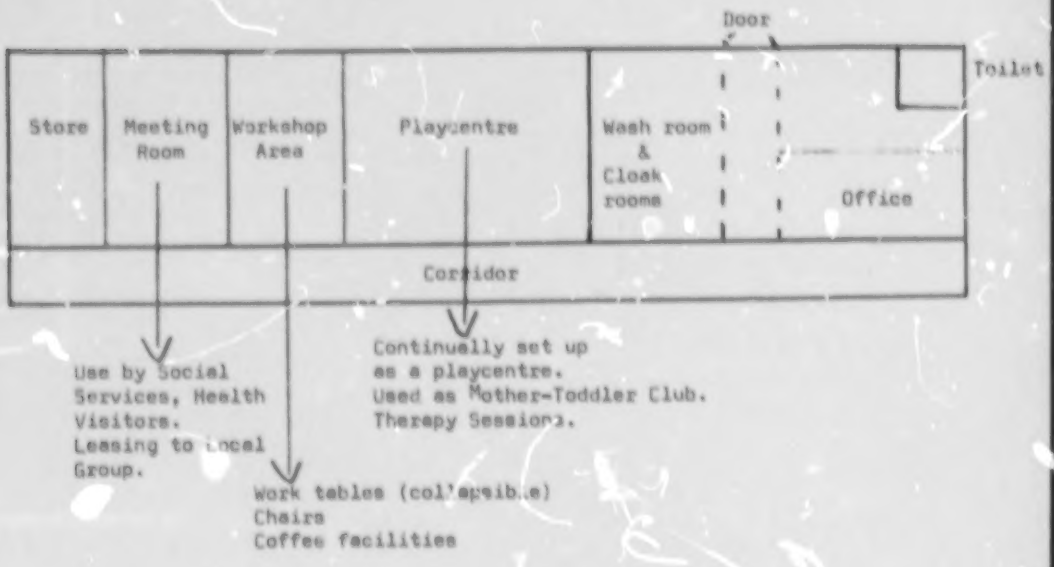
Development of activities for adults - Keep-fit, Craft, Adult Literacy, Child Care.

Holiday Use

The Centre could continue to open through the summer under the Holiday Playschemes, offering play sessions for those children in the most need.

Possible Staffing and Organisation of Centre

There are 3 main rooms in the hut. The large room would make an ideal playcentre for use by the under-5s in the form of Mother-Toddler Clubs, Opportunity groups etc.



Staffing Needs

a. Warden or Neighbourhood Worker - to overview development of Centre as a whole; lease to local groups, care of materials and building.

b. Mother-Leaders - possible for 2 groups e.g. Monday/Tuesday
Wednesday/Thursday.
Target of 15 children in a group.

c. Additional Staffing: Voluntary Groups e.g. Community Action, Manpower Services.

Approximate Costing

Initial Development

a.	Cost of setting up Play Centre for Under 5's	£569. 87
b.	Workshop Area	£1000. 00
c.	Lounge Meeting Area	£1000. 00

Further Needs

Toilets, only one available, 2 could be made in the Cloakroom Area	£2000. 00
Fencing and gates for outside play area	£2000. 00

Ongoing costs per year

Heating and lighting

Maintenance/Cleaning

Toilet Supplies

Salary or remuneration for Warden, Mother-Leaders

27

Appendix 6

July 1981

THE NORTH HULL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

21st Avenue
North Hull Estate
Hull

General Report - July 1981

The parents and I have continued to meet during the year, either at McMillan Nursery School or in one of the parent's homes. In January, we applied to the Education Committee for the lease of the East Hut on 21st Avenue, which was no longer used by the Authority. In March we were assigned the lease, but no help could be given with heating, lighting and insurance. In May, we applied for a grant from the Inner City Special Projects Fund, to buy toys to set up the Mother-Toddler Club with an initial supply of creative toys, paints and paper. This grant was approved. Since May, the Committee has been waiting for the details of the lease to be sorted out. We re-submitted an application to the new Education Committee for help with heating and lighting and insurance, as this has become the problem, especially for a new group, which initially does not have the funds to cover for these items. We expect to hear within the next few weeks that this issue has been resolved. We have also applied for Inner City Funding (Outer Area) for 1982-83 to help with the Centre's development; to the Carnegie Foundation and the Van Leer Foundation. The Committee has attended several Open Meetings held by the Hull Council for Voluntary Service and Hull City Council to build up their knowledge on applying for grants and information on available help. We have recently decided to co-opt three members onto the Committee, who have shown an interest in the project and will be able to help with decision-making as the project develops into its active phase. We have decided to seek Charity status for the project.

We expect to open the Mother-Toddler Club in the second week in September. We hope, as funds become available, to make the facilities available to the neighbourhood with keep-fit classes for the mothers; adult literacy classes; opportunity groups for parents with handicapped children and a meeting place for pensioners. There is scope for all kinds of development once the initial phase has become secure. However, the priority need is for a place for families with young children to meet and play in a safe environment. It is my belief that the Parent's Committee will in time have the confidence, the skills and techniques to manage the Centre and in turn be resource people for other parents in the neighbourhood.

Management Committee

Margaret Rice, Co-ordinator, Headteacher, McMillan Nursery School, 5th Avenue, North Hull Estate

Wendy Buxton, Secretary, 53, 20th Avenue
John Butler, Treasurer, 10, 1st Avenue
Rose Butler, " " " "
Karen Burton, Mother-Toddler Club Leader
Gillian Gardham " " " "
Joan Jennison, Committee member

Co-opted Members, September 1981

John Garton (Auditor) Social Services, Retired
Sue Whyley, Parent Governor
Marjorie Cook, Matron, Linnaeus House, Hull

The Committee has requested a meeting with representatives of the Education Department, Hull City Council, and Hull Council for Voluntary Service on Wednesday 2nd September or Thursday 3rd September to discuss the implications of the lease. We hope that by that time, funding will be available to the Committee so that we can plan to make a start on organising the equipment and materials and preparing the playcentre room for the Mother-Toddler Club in the first week of September.

Margaret Rice, M.Ed
McMillan Nursery School
5th Avenue
North Hull Estate
Hull

Copy of letter to Committee, September 82.

NORTH HULL NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE

21st Avenue

September 1982

Dear Committee Member,

We have an important decision to make concerning our future. Both Sue and I have spent many hours in the last few days on the subject.

(1) We advise that the Committee should give serious consideration to moving out from the 21st Avenue hut for the following reasons:

(a) more and increasingly more money will need to be spent on a building that is basically unsound;

(b) it is a very big building, probably bigger than we need and is going to be difficult to heat.

(2) We should re-think on the availability of the Horse hut accommodation, which for a smaller amount of initial money could be made into an attractive and warm Centre.

(3) I would suggest that we might follow these steps:

(a) request Sangwins to give us an evaluation of the Horse Hut in terms of the provision of toilets, washbasins, state of the heating, roofs, etc. so we have an idea of the money involved, facilities for tea/sink, washing facility;

(b) on receiving that information see if such a move makes sense;

(c) keep activities going on at 21st Avenue during this time/heating/hot water.

(4) Money already spent

1158. 02	Fencing*	we could
346. 52	Carpet *	re-locate
100. 00	Insurance	
38. 00	Safety Mat	
30. 00	Grills	
107. 94	Paints	
1761. 52	Total	
44	OU Planning	
	+ £4000 Van Leer	

Potential money for Structural Alterations

Capital (Inner City)	650
Educ.	1000
S.S.	150
B.B.C.	500
Sp. Trust	50
	2350

Revenue Still available 82/83 £1,738

some

->TOY LIBRARY

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SECTION 2

I The Neighbourhood Centres Project

(1) The Beginnings
(2) The Professional Centre
(3) Rationale of the Project
(4) Aims of Co-ordinators in Pilot Areas
(5) The Pilot Areas
(6) Areas of Interest developed within the Project
  (a) Professional Support Group
  (b) Urban Studies Group
  (c) Resource Base
  (d) Outside Evaluation/Assessment

II Pilot Areas

(1) Flow Chart and Map of Hull
(2) Map of Bransholme and Stepney Lane Area of Hull

III Pilot Area A : North Bransholme Area

(1) Description of Area
(2) Method of Working
(3) The Role of the Education Welfare Officer
(4) Developments within the Area
(5) Reports by Headteachers involved in the Project
  1. Broadacre
  2. The Dales
  3. Highlands

IV Pilot Area B : Stepney Lane Playgroup

(1) Description of Area
(2) Method of Working
(3) The Role of the Supervisor : Mrs. Jacques
(4) Developments
(5) Report by D. Jacques : Supervisor

Appendices : (1) Copy of Notice advertising Parent/Toddler Club
(2) Copy of Notice advertising Community Lunch
(3) Copy of Notes taken at Headteachers' Meeting January 1983

SECTION 2

I THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE PROJECT

(1) The Beginnings

In September 1983, Mrs. Rice joined the staff of Humberside College of Higher Education as the Humberside Teacher Fellow attached to the Professional Centre. Under the terms of the Fellowship, Mrs. Rice was expected to make a contribution to Initial Teacher Training, Student Teaching Practice and In-Service Courses, as well as following a research project connected with the agreed area of interest, The Early Years.

(2) The Professional Centre

The Professional Centre aims to develop short courses for teachers and is staffed by a Tutor-in-Charge, Dr. D. Bates and an Associate Tutor, Patrick Doyle. Patrick Doyle had been aware of the developments of the McMillan Nursery School since 1977 as a member of the Governing Body, and in that role had continued to provide active support from the initial stage of the Neighbourhood Centre to the present time. Patrick has been the Chairman of the Hull Joint Working Party on Community Centre and Community Development, the Chairman of the Joint Working Party on Playschemes since 1981 and a member of the Steering Committee of a recently formed Community Enterprise, known as the Inglemire Community Police Project. Therefore with such a wide background and experience, it was a natural development for a working relationship to be established and in November Patrick agreed to become joint co-ordinator of the Project, to be known as the Neighbourhood Centre Project, Hull.

(3) Rationale of the Project

Mrs. Rice was aware of the difficulties of entering into a wider professional role in developing parental involvement within the school and even more so when extending that role into the Community. However that experience had made her conscious of the growth in understanding and awareness that could be gained by the parent and professional within a wider relationship. Within the context of the school, opportunities and activities had been developed which allowed parent and professional to meet informally, through

which a different kind of relationship could be fostered. Parents had the chance to talk and to be listened to, and the opportunity to share a problem. The professional had the opportunity to support and advise, and become more aware of the talents or problems of the parent.

It is perhaps the quality of this relationship that has enabled the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre Committee to survive through many difficulties, where a commitment to each other and the ideals of a Centre have been crucial in its continued existence.

Within the Project, therefore, two clear goals emerged. First to examine the role of other professional workers in developing activities for parent/child, through which relationships could be fostered; secondly to examine the role of the parent involved in such activities, need for support and growth in the developing relationship between the parent and professional.

(4) Aims of Co-ordinators in Pilot Areas

The stated aims of the research/action part of the project can be seen as the following:

1. To help key workers in an area to develop skills and expertise acquired by Mrs Rice during the growth of the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre.
2. To assist them become resource personnel within their own communities.
3. To help them to develop parent activities within their area, depending on the expressed needs of other key professional people in the community and the needs of the parents.
4. To provide the professional and parent groups with ideas, about fund applications, role of the committee, extension of parent activities.
5. To help them develop links with other agencies such as Social Services, the Health Authority and individuals with similar concerns and interests.

(5) The Pilot Areas

Two areas of Hull were identified, where the possibility of advising other professionals to develop activities similar to those developed within McMillan Nursery School and within the Neighbourhood Centre. These activities would vary according to the needs of that area, and the families living within it and the needs of the professional worker.

A defined geographical area, with many young families, a Council Estate with limited facilities for the pre-school child were the criteria for the choice of the first pilot area. A knowledge of the needs of that area had already been acquired by Mrs Rice through the Education Welfare Officer for the area, Mrs. A. Carpenter. The Education Welfare Officer could be seen as a key worker within the community and a link between the Primary Schools.

Mrs Rice had developed links with Social Services in her work at McMillan Nursery School and wanted to explore supporting a professional worker from a S.S. background and in a different area of Hull. An awareness by Mrs Rice of the work of the Social Services Playgroup in an inner-city area facing re-development and an acquaintance with the supervisor led Mrs Rice to identify Stepney as the second area within the Project.

(6.) Areas of Interest developing within the Project

(a) Professional Support Group

A small group of professionals who have provided support and advice through regular meetings with the co-ordinators. The group have received regular reports on the work in the Pilot Areas, and acted as a 'sounding board' for ideas developing out of the project.

(b) Urban Studies Group

To develop a nucleus of professionals who through presentations, visits etc. can become more aware of local developments, issues and personalities within Humberside concerned with Community Development. The group would form a planning team for a major conference on Urban Issues across a wide spectrum of professions and interests to be staged in the early months of 1984.

(c) Resource Base

To develop a base/resource room where materials on Community, Pre-School, Parental Involvement programmes can be displayed and books, reviews, extracts of relevant books for students and staff. The room could be used as a contact point for the collection and dissemination of materials to interested schools and other professional or community workers.

(d) Outside Evaluation/Assessment

To bring in an outside evaluator who would be able to look at the project as a whole, and to make an assessment of the gains or otherwise within the defined areas of the project.

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II. PILOT AREAS

1. Flow Chart & Map of Hull

1983
Jan-July

AREA A

Phase 2
AREA B

North Bransholme

3 Primary Schools

Education Welfare Officer

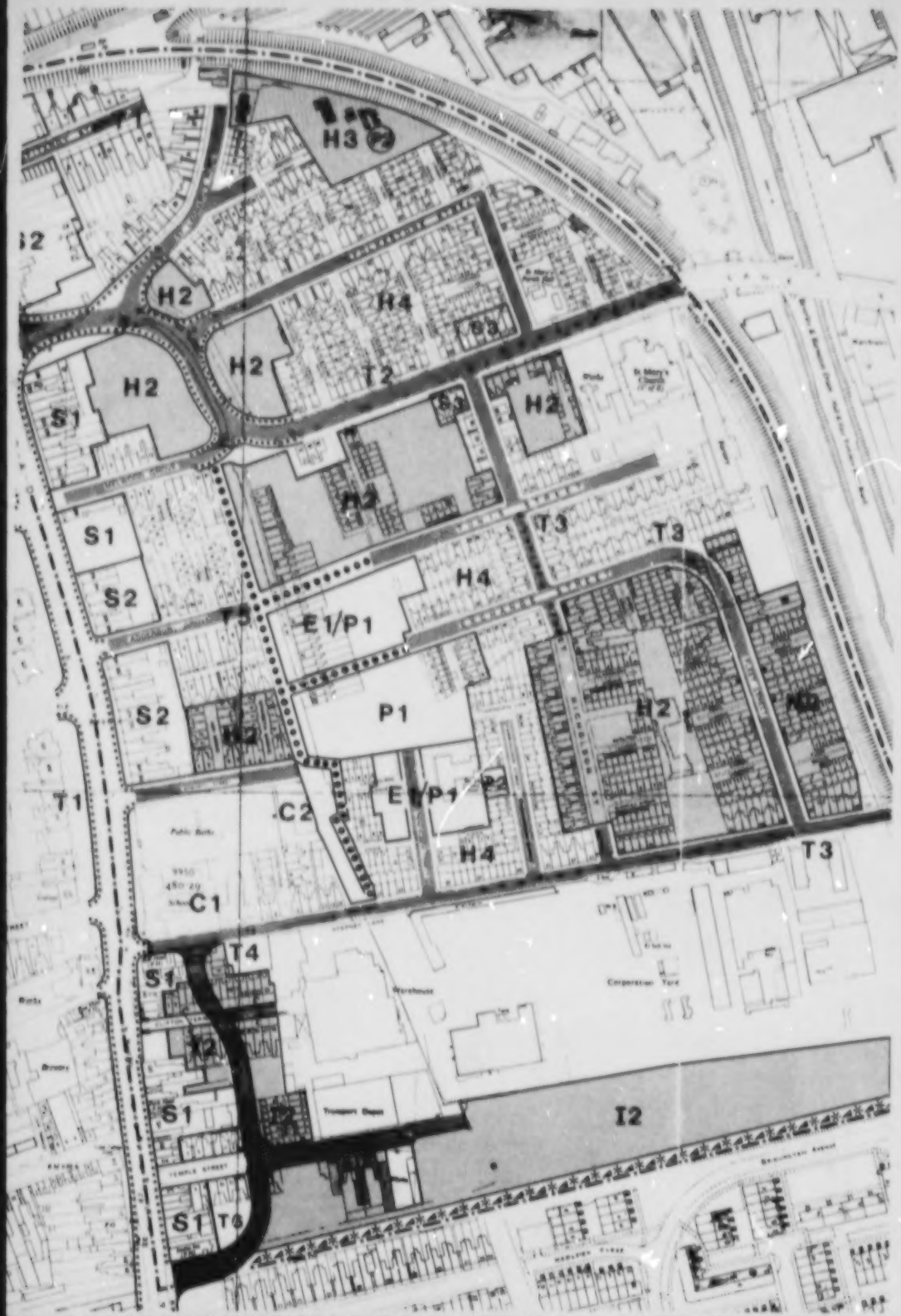
Stepney Lane

Social Services Playgroup

Playgroup Supervisor

PLAN OF HULL

BRANSHOLME
AND
BRANSHOLME NORTH
SCALE : 6 INCHES TO 1 MILE
Broadacre
Primary
School
BRANSHOLME
NORTH
BRANSHOLME
NORTH
DISTRICT
CENTRE
37
SUTTON



FROM THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE CROWN COPYRIGHT

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III. PILOT AREA A : NORTH BRANSHOLME AREA

Site : Three Primary Schools

Professional Workers : Three Headteachers - Mrs J. Collinson, Mrs S. Maw, Mr. C. Walker

The Education Welfare Officer - Mrs. A. Carpenter

1. Description of Area

The North Bransholme Estate was built in the late seventies and early eighties. The estate is served by three Primary Schools and two Junior High Schools. There is one Public House and a small shopping area, an Army Cadets Headquarters and a Social Hall. The area is served by a number of mobile shops. The surrounding area is open countryside extending in the north to the village of Wawne. Further south is another part of the estate, known as South Bransholme, which provides a larger Centre for shopping. The Health Centre, Police Station, Family Advice Centre, Library, Careers Office and Housing are located around and near the Centre. The area is well served by Primary and Junior High Schools but has only one Senior High School. On other parts of the estate are two established Children's Playgrounds, a Boys' Club, Lambwath Hall Private Sports Club and other facilities, which emphasises the lack of facilities in the north part of the estate.

2. Method of Working

Discussion - From October to December, discussions took place with many individuals from a variety of backgrounds and experience and officers from the Local Education Authority. Once these initial contacts had been made, Mrs. Rice then made contact with the headteachers and set up meetings with them and Mrs. Carpenter, the Education Welfare Officer. An outline of these meetings is enclosed in order to provide an understanding of the gradual development of ideas and clarification of goals, as experience in each area was gained.

3. The Role of the Education Welfare Officer

Discussion February 14th - Mrs Rice and Mrs Carpenter

Relationship already established through:

(a) Supply cover at McMillan Nursery School
(b) Involvement as Volunteer Bureau Organiser for the Hull Council for Voluntary Services, following a three years study for the Bachelor of Education Degree
(c) Member of the National Children's Bureau

Mrs. Rice in her role as headteacher and aware that the position had been crucial to developments on North Hull, felt she could identify with other headteachers. Mrs Carpenter, seen as the link between the schools, was the ideal person, within the educational service, having access to both educational and social service agencies as well as the Community. Therefore, in an extended role, she could become a resource person within the Community.

Proposed Role

(i) Within the school - to develop working relationship with individual headteachers and links between schools
(ii) Involved in an initial discussion with headteachers and planning sessions
(iii) Involvement in actual activities fostered, Toy Loan Library, Parent/Toddler Club
(iv) Member of Urban Studies Group
(v) Attendance at relevant courses and visits with co-ordinators
(vi) Development of links into the Community - through visits to homes and active links with Social Services
(vii) Supportive informal contact with parents
(viii) Passing of information on local knowledge e.g. Hull CVS etc.

4. Developments within the Area

October : Letter sent to Mr J. Bolton (Acting Divisional Officer for Hull) outlining aims of project

November : Meeting with Mr Bolton to discuss project with reference to the role of the Education Welfare Officer and the possibility of approaching the headteachers of the three Primary Schools on North Bransholme.

January : Meeting with the three headteachers:

Mrs J. Collinson : The Dales Primary School
Mrs S. Maw : Highlands Primary School
Mr. C. Walker : Broadacre Primary School

Discussion on the project, the Van Leer Foundation, expectation of their role; headteachers outlined their needs. These needs were then reviewed by Mrs Rice and as a result a letter was sent to the heads outlining the outcome of that review. Extract from letter dated 26th January enclosed.

February : Second meeting with the headteachers, discussion on Mrs Carpenter's role; agreement on objectives, approach to Kingston Training Workshop to make some of the toys. The Workshop takes young people on a Government scheme and Mrs Rice felt that it would be a useful link for the young people to make things for children and actually be involved in presenting them to the schools.

March : Meeting at Kingston Training Workshop. Mrs Maw, Mrs. Collinson, Mrs S. Christie, Deputy Head, Broadacres, Mrs Carpenter and Mrs Rice met with the personnel to discuss the making of toys and printing. Catalogues were brought in, individual items, puzzles, manipulative toys were discussed, and it was agreed that a price list of toys and puzzles would be provided by the Workshop.

April : Due to the complexity of the various developments and the problems of time for Mrs Rice, the need to revise objectives was required. Margaret Rice, Patrick Doyle and Angela Carpenter arranged to visit each headteacher, where Patrick outlined the need for a re-think on what could be achieved within the framework of time and commitment. These revised objectives were as follows:

School Based Activity

The Dales Primary School
Highlands Primary School

(a) to provide resources to extend the present Toy Loan Library

Broadacre Primary School

(a) to provide resources, support to develop the Broadacre Parent Toddler Club, beginning on May 18th

(b) to provide leaflets advertising the Toy Loan Library, which have been colour coded for each school

(c) Both headteachers to monitor the developments of the Toy Loan Library, assessing its impact on mothers/fathers, gains and problems encountered.

to make a report available to the co-ordinators at the end of July

(b) to provide resources to develop a Toy Loan Library within the Club

(c) to provide leaflets advertising the Toddler Club and Toy Loan Library

(d) to provide support to the headmaster during initial phases

(e) Mrs Carpenter to make direct contact with individual parents

to make an assessment on the extension of her role and make that report available at the end of July

(f) Mr Walker to assess his situation as headteacher, problems encountered, and make his report available at the end of July

Community Based Activity

Organisation of a Community Lunch

to provide the financial support to develop a series of Community Lunches as a means of developing relationships between professional and voluntary people working in the neighbourhood of North Bransholme. The first one to be held in June in the Highlands Primary School, followed by a July meeting at the Social Hall. Mrs Carpenter to liaise with Mrs S Maw who has kindly offered her school and provide suggestions for those workers who may like to come for the first lunch.

July : £150 worth of toys were presented to Mrs. Maw and Mrs. Collinson and £70 worth to Mr. Walker by Councillor Veronica Wilson, Vice Chairman of the Humberside Education Committee and Chairman of the Under 5s Council. In addition, a cheque for £30 was donated to each of the headteachers within the Project from the B.B.C. Children in Need Appeal.

Extract from letter sent to: Angela Carpenter, EWO
Angela Stones : Support Worker
Patrick Doyle : Co-ordinator
Dorothy Jacques : Stepney Lane
Heads at Bransholme Schools

I have carefully looked at the needs expressed by each of you and feel that our first priority should be to concentrate on the Toy Library as a means of developing an activity in which staff and parents relationships can be nurtured, in an informal setting. In fact this will mean the establishing of a new Toy Library at Broadacres and growth and expansion of those already established at Dales & Highlands.

These developments may in fact lead to the formation of a nucleus of parents and children who may become the basis for a mother-toddler club. It will be a question of observing how the mothers and staff feel in the situation and activities may develop differently within the individual schools.

I therefore propose that:

1. We apply to the Education Department for funds to develop the Toy Libraries
2. Part of that money be used to sponsor the making of puzzles, bricks and other wooden toys, by Kingston Training Workshop (Government sponsored scheme)
3. The rest of the money be divided in order for Broadacres to establish a Toy Library and to supplement the other libraries at Dales and Highlands, as a means to encourage parent/staff relationships and extend the educational experience of the pre-school child.

There has been so much information gained and so many exacting possibilities that might develop within the project, but I feel it is important to agree on a basic goal and not be over-stretched, both for myself and your expectations of what can be achieved.

Yours sincerely,

M. Rice
Humberside Teacher Fellow

3.5.1 Report by Colin Walker : Headteacher Broadacre Primary School

BROADACRE PARENT/TODDLER GROUP

Broadacre Primary School is less than two years old, having open in September 1981. The building is of an open plan design and consists of two teaching wings, each designed to accommodate 150 pupils, attached to a main block containing hall, kitchen and administration area.

Presently, the class size averages 22, there being 66 children aged between 5 and 9 on roll. Staffing consists of three teachers plus head. Information on pre-school children and their ages suggests an annual intake of between 17 and 23 resulting in a school roll of between 85 and 135 during the next few years.

The numbers on roll has been seriously affected by the shelving of housing development plans for the area.

Previously, parental involvement has been mainly of a social nature based around concerts and harvest festival services etc. although one parent has been a regular contributor to practical work with the older children.

When starting the Parent Toddler group, information was sent out and contacts made both through the school and its pupils and the Education Welfare Officer in the community. The group started with a small amount of equipment provided by Neighbourhood Centres Project and some provided from the school's own slender resources. It is held in a room that is self-contained and has an external exit to a hard surface area. Toilet facilities are accessible through the reception class area. The room had previously been set out as a room in which parents could wait, chat and have a cup of tea when bringing children on pre-school visits during the half term prior to starting school. A walk-in cupboard in the room was made available for the equipment.

In the three weeks it has been running, the group has built up to sixteen parents and their children. Because of the nature of the group, the amount of equipment and the size of the room, it was decided that this was big enough and a waiting list will be established for the future.

The parents are being encouraged to do as much of the organisation and running of the group as they can amongst themselves. Each week they contribute a fixed sum towards providing refreshments etc. They meet on one morning a week. The session begins with play and welcoming people as they arrive from 9.30 a.m. onwards. At about 10.00 there is a break for refreshments and then more play activities. Parents are encouraged to join in with the play activities and to make them more meaningful both as a physical activity and as a basis for language development and communication. The session usually finishes with singing games after cleaning up and putting away the equipment. Some of the play activities involved are modelling with dough, crayons, puzzles, home corner, climbing frame, slide and push along trikes.

It is hoped that a further input of resources could be used to start up a toy library in conjunction with the group.

C.P. Walker
Headteacher

3.5.2 Report by Mrs. J. Collinson : Headteacher The Dales Primary School

TOY LOAN CLUB

This 5-9 age range primary school has been open for nearly four years and children are accommodated in an open plan designed building for 300, plus two large open plan designed mobile units outside the main school block. The school is situated in a large new council housing estate, started some seven years ago. The main catchment area of the school was built between 3½ and 1½ years ago. It has predominantly young families, with a large proportion of free meals. The estate has very few amenities in the way of shops etc. It is only recently that a public house was opened on the estate (i.e. after 7 years). It has no health centre and only three shops for a housing capacity of some 2,700/3,000 households.

The school has grown over this 4 year period to a number on roll now of some 440/460 children. There are 18 teachers, plus the headteacher and part-time remedial help. Class sizes vary from 23 to 25 (1st year children - 5 classes) to 27 to 30 children (in the other 11 classes). Two teachers work with lower school and middle school children respectively for group work with children with language and/or reading problems. For the next year at least our numbers of children in school will probably be maintained at their present level. After this, it is difficult to predict but during the next 4/5 years it is certain that numbers will drop, although there are not many signs as yet.

We have encouraged parents to be involved in their children's education from the beginning and a fair number of parents are involved in the following ways throughout the school:

(i) helping on a regular basis in school with activities like sewing, baking, etc.;
(ii) helping regularly on school educational visits, which are frequent;
(iii) helping with weekly library book "changing" activities;
(iv) a great many parents attend our weekly children's assemblies, each Friday, when the children "take" the assembly;
(v) a small number of parents help with fund raising activities like jumble sales, spring fayres, etc., as do a small number become involved in Harvest Tea events, etc. which the school provides for the old people in the community;
(vi) second and third year parents have recently become involved in a

"Home Reading Scheme" we have started in an attempt to interest them in their children's reading progress at a crucial stage in their development. After a slow start, this is becoming a very successful scheme of involvement.

When we ask parents to become involved in school activities, they respond well.

The toy/book library loan service has been provided for our parents for about two and a half years now. Initially the authority gave us encouragement to start it and financial backing on two occasions with grants of £200 each time. We bought toys but did not buy books, borrowing them specifically for this age range from the School Library Service.

Up to a term ago the service was solely for children who were due to start school the next term (i.e. for one pre-school term only) with certain exceptions usually where the family included a 2+/3+ child also. It was reasonably successful with numbers of children attending on a regular weekly basis of between 4 and 10 pre-school children. Children and their parents came into school on Thursday afternoons any time between 2.30 and 3.30 p.m. to choose a toy and book to borrow for home use for a week. They were encouraged to "browse" and play with toys before choosing, although about half of the mothers and children stayed only 10 to 15 minutes on average. We offered them coffee, at a teacher's expense initially, and orange juice for the children, in an attempt to encourage them to stay the full three quarters of an hour. It was a very pleasant weekly event and I popped in as often as I could (after initially attempting to run the service) to meet these children and their mothers (only one or two fathers ever appeared over the two year period).

We did contemplate extending this service for a longer period each week but there were problems of -

(a) Finance. If numbers became greater as a result of offering the service for a whole afternoon, then we did not have the numbers of toys available for the predicted increased numbers to borrow.

(b) Space. This was not an insurmountable problem but nevertheless a problem, as we felt that we had no available space in school to allow pre-school children to be allowed to remain for the whole afternoon.

However, Mrs. Rice contacted us at an opportune time, when we were reviewing the success of this venture and thinking about possible changes in our arrangements. This review came about partly because our first year children had been moved together to be contained as a unit in our main building as five classes, when

previously three of the classes had been "housed" in one of the mobile classroom units.

When we discussed her experiences at McMillan Nursery with her, and the possibility of Van Leer funding, problems we were beginning to grapple with seemed less unconquereable, and my lower school staff were very willing to attempt the changes in provision for these pre-school children and their parents which now constitute the arrangements for our newly-named Parent and Toddler Club. The weekly provision for the last term is as follows:-

(a) By re-arranging the P.E. timetable for two first year classes on Tuesday afternoons, we have extended our Toy Loan Club to be in operation for the whole afternoon. This is because each of the two classes is out of their teaching area for part of the afternoon to allow space for the pre-school children to come in and play, accompanied by their mothers or fathers;

(b) Whilst they are in school, a teacher is allocated to "keep an eye" on the proceedings and success of the venture, only intervening when necessary with (i) advice on the activities offered and (ii) encouragement to parents to "mix" socially with each other, if any parents seem shy or withdrawn. The parents work an informal rota system in looking after the register of parents/children attending each week and the items "borrowed" from the toy/book loan stock, as well as two parents being responsible for collecting 10p per week dues which replenish the coffee/biscuits/orange stocks.

(c) The number of children attending the sessions has increased to an average of between 12/18 children and parents present. A very informal atmosphere is developing partly due to the security offered by our supportive presence of one of the teachers in the lower school team. Even our probationary teacher is encouraged to take part (and supervise). The headteacher still pops in for at least 10/20 minutes per session.

(d) Activities have been extended to include the following each week: sand/water play (very popular), painting, crayoning, cutting out activities, plasticine modelling and sampling the toys available for loan before choosing.

(e) <u>Teachers' observations</u>: All six teachers involved have felt that the altered arrangements have been an improvement. After a few problems at the beginning mainly involving the clarification by me of the teachers' role as catalyst/supporter, the project has progressed to the stage where the parents feel reasonably secure, and the atmosphere is very pleasantly informal and stable.

To explain what I mean, perhaps an edited version of how the Toy Loan Club progressed during the first few weeks will illustrate the points being made.

Weeks 1-3

After an initial reticence/self consciousness on the part of parents to involve themselves (a) with each other socially and (b) with their children, the staff involved felt that there was an "atmosphere" on the part of the parents who seemed to be settling into two distinct groups with one or two uninvolved parents on the sidelines. One teacher wondered if we as professionals should allow the parents/toddlers more freedom to run the Club and that perhaps a teacher presence inhibited them. After a discussion later, staff agreed to continue giving positive "friendly" support to the parents and to play a more active role in integrating parents into the group whenever it seemed necessary or feasible. The children seemed to have no problems whatsoever and have played very happily together from the beginning.

Weeks 4-7

There was a very noticeable improvement in relationships between parents from then on. Staff have noted the following developments:

(a) a willingness on the part of the parents to be involved in a rota for recording the weekly toy/book loan transactions;

(b) the efficient way the refreshments are organised by them plus the "clearing up" that is done most willingly;

(c) a regular nucleus of mothers and their children who come nearly every week, adding stability;

(d) a friendliness on the part of these mothers towards new parents and a willingness to involve them in the work of the club;

(e) a gradual increase in the amount of time parents are spending playing with and talking to their children. At first, most parents tended to observe the children and chat to each other, not being involved in their children's play to any great degree, nor did they talk much with their children. This latter observation is a particularly pleasing one, I feel.

Summary (i.e. my comments)

Although the increased provision for these small children and their parents has only been in operation for a short time, there are several comments to be made.

It became obvious very quickly how important it was that teachers played an active role in facilitating relationships between the parents in the early weeks. It also became apparent very early how difficuly it was for me to be available for any length of time to either cover for the teacher involved that week in the Club, or to spend any length of time with the parents and pre-school children

during each session. However, the quick 5/10 minute visits once or twice during each session seem to work adequately. Three or four parents come and chat to me before or after sessions usually, and two parents make a point of bringing their children to say "thank you" and "goodbye" each week.

Not only the mothers, but the teachers seemed more confident and relaxed after the first few weeks.

It seems to me, after nearly a term, that providing a professional worker (i.e. a teacher) is involved each week in the scheme to monitor the situation and facilitate the relationships between the mothers and their children then the scheme will be much more successful than if the mothers were left to run it themselves.

I feel that parental involvement in general is absolutely essential for a school to function at its most successful level, mainly because past experience has shown me that if a school's staff and its parents work together then the child's education benefits because of this close relationship. In this particular situation of pre-school involvement there seem to be additional benefits in that not only is the school able to provide activities which help these small children's development in various ways, but the mothers have told us how much they enjoy these weekly sessions for the social contact with adults. Also, as reported earlier, we suspect that gradually these parents have been encouraged to talk more to their children on these occasions than they did in the past.

The time given by my teachers to the running of these sessions has been quite substantial (one afternoon per week); the time I have given has been less than this in practice because of interventions, although it is always intended that I provide cover for the teacher on duty each week. However, although teacher-cover has been difficult sometimes, nevertheless we are all agreed that it is a very valuable facility we are providing for these parents and children. We also feel that the teachers benefit from the opportunity to build up a good relationship with the pre-school children and their parents.

The main problems encountered seem to be (a) the difficulty I have in providing consistent cover for the teacher on duty at the toy loan play sessions, and (b) organising our own school-age children who normally occupy the open plan designed space used for these sessions so that they do not disturb the pre-school children and their parents too much.

Future aspirations are that I hope to be able to cover for my teachers more

consistently next term and also to keep the numbers attending these sessions at a reasonable level (14 - 18 children).

I would love to extend the sessions to include another afternoon per week, but at the moment, there seems to be very little chance of that happening. It will only be possible when our numbers on roll decrease (which will not be for some time yet) and we have more space.

3.5.9 Report by Mrs S Maw : Headteacher Highlands Primary School

NORTH BRANSHOLME NEIGHBOURHOOD PROJECT
DEVELOPMENT OF TOY LOAN/BOOK LENDING LIBRARY FOR PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN AT HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Highlands Primary School is a large open plan school designed to accommodate 520 children in the 5-9 year old age range. The building which opened in September 1978, comprises of 6 'areas'. Each area consists of an art/craft section, an open section, a semi-open section and a completely enclosed, carpeted 'quiet' room. A double mobile classroom is sited at the side of the playground.

At present the school has 18 full-time primary teachers and with 435 pupils on roll the pupil teacher ratio is 24:2. The number of pupils in each year varies considerably but the number of 'rising 5's' is expected to be between 70-85.

The school also has a purpose built 40 place nursery staffed by 2 nursery teachers and 2 nursery assistants. As it is the only nursery on North Bransholme, the waiting list contains about 150 names.

Parental involvement has always been part of the nursery programme and there has never been a shortage of volunteers for helping in the nursery. Parents are involved in the primary school in the following ways:

Areas 1 & 2 (5-6 year olds) taking small groups for number games, language games and art/craft work. Also for school outings.

Area 3 (6-7 year olds) taking small groups for baking. Also for school outings.

Area 4 (7-8 year olds) taking small groups for language and number games and also baking. Also for school outings.

Parents frequently help with covering books and cards, repairing equipment, making birthday cards, making concert costumes, duplicating work sheets etc. Many parents also help, in various ways, with fund-raising events.

The Toy Loan/Book Library Club for pre-nursery children was first discussed in January 1982. On 15th February £250 was made available for equipment. £202.05 worth of toys, and £48.35 worth of books were ordered on 1st March.

The Music Room was made available on Wednesday afternoons from 2.45 p.m. - 3.20 p.m. and the first meeting was held at the beginning of June. The children played with the toys for about half an hour and then selected a toy and book to borrow for a week. Equipment included jigsaws, constructional toys, visual discrimmination apparatus, pre-number games, conversation toys and books. (Great care was taken to prevent duplication with equipment in the nursery). Mrs M. Crossland, Senior Teacher organised the activities (her colleagues from Area 1 kindly agreeing to take her class).

The number of parents attending averaged 10 and number of children varied between 10-15. The club was well received but space was limited. Another disadvantage seemed to be lack of continuity as most children were offered a nursery place within two terms.

It became obvious that the club needed to expand, both in scope and duration, so in April 1983 the club moved to the mobile classroom and altered the time to 1.45 p.m. - 3.15 p.m. Extra activities included the use of sand, clay paint, chalk and Wendy House; story telling and simple handwork. Parents now take more responsibility for organising the activities - and the tea-making but Mrs Crosslands overall expertise is still needed. (The Head-teacher now takes Mrs Crossland's class during the first half of the after-noon). There has already been one occasion when it was impossible for any teacher to be present for the first ½ hour and this showed that the parents were quite willing to take over the running of the club for this short period of time. However I still feel the need to make <u>slow</u> progress towards turning the club into a parent/toddler group. The average attendance is 10 adults and up to 12 children.

Mrs. S.D. Maw
Headteacher.

Mobile Classroom
Highlands Primary
School.

IV. PILOT AREA B : STEPNEY LANE PLAYGROUP

1. Description of Area

Population 2,800. Stepney Lane is to be closed and under the re-development plan access will be through Nicholson Street and Fleet Street. Housing immediately adjacent to the playgroup in Nicholson Street is to be demolished and this area will be re-developed. 64% of the housing in the area is to be retained. As far as possible residents will be allowed to remain in the area. The housing is mainly old terraces in poor repair. There is considerable traffic down Stepney Lane to a corporation yard and local industry and this constitutes a hazard.

Local shopping facilities are good with supermarkets and small shops. There is easy access to the town centre on foot or by bus.

Play space and recreation areas are in short supply. Pearson Park is a short walk away but on the other side of the main Beverley Road. The houses are mainly without gardens and the children play in the streets. In the re-development plan there is to be a large play space with facilities adjacent to the Stepney Lane Primary School. There are also to be small play areas interspersed amongst the new houses and on vacant plots amongst the old housing.

The Primary school is a 19th Century building with a separate dining annexe in nearby Fenchurch Street, but will not be replaced.

Community Facilities

4 Public Houses (1:700 population of city norm of 1:1500)
1 Licensed Club
1 Bingo Hall on the North side of Sculcoates Lane
1 Church but the hall has been converted into an industrial store
Club Nexus in Stepney Lane
Park Hotel Amateur Boxing Club
Peter Pan Day Nursery
5 Doctors Surgeries and 1 Dentist within walking distance
Public Baths and Library

Community Meeting Hall

A need for one was expressed in the survey but due to lack of funds the City Council is considering joint use of the school buildings for this.

2. Method of Working

Similar to Area A, discussions took place between many individuals and Social Services Officers on the possibilities of working together, followed by an agreement on aims and ways of achieving those aims.

3. The Role of the Supervisor : Mrs Jacques

Mrs Jacques expressed her needs for extending her work with parents and children and outlined the following needs:

development of a Toy Library
a place to hold a Parent/Toddler Club
a Dad's Club, as many of the father's were unemployed
a Pensioner's Club

As the building opposite the Playgroup building was not fully used, it was decided that Mrs Rice should explore the possibility of obtaining the building for the use to develop those activities outlined by Mrs Jacques. This building is known as Club Nexus.

4. Developments : October to June

October : Initial visit to Playgroup Supervisor to discuss possibilities of working together

November : Meeting at Social Services Dept, Bond Street to discuss project with Mr Auty, Principal Officer Day Care; Mrs B. Jackson, Under 5's Officer; Mrs D. Jacques, Playgroup Supervisor and Mr M. Wilson Day Care Parental Involvement and Support, role of Mrs Rice and working relationship to Mrs Jacques clarified. Full support given.

January : Contact made with Beverley Road Residents Association interested in developing community facilities in the area.

February : Communication sent to the Social Services, requesting information on the ownership of Club Nexus, outlining needs of the group and Mrs Jacques and possible developments with the Beverley Road Residents Association.
Mrs Jacques invited to attend second seminar of the Aspects of Partnership Course, organised by Mrs Rice, which features a video of Parent/Toddler Club at the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre.

Visit to playgroup with Support Worker and viewed Club Nexus building. Many possibilities for community use with kitchen and toilets available, although in need of cleaning. Windows would need to be installed.
Mr. Wilson (S.Services Day Care) in contact - many difficulties with Users Rights for Club Nexus. The matter was in the hands of the legal section at County Hall.

March : Chairperson and two committee members of visited Club Nexus met with Mrs Rice and Mrs Jacques. Mrs Jacques explained to the Committeemembers how she viewed the building being used from the Playgroup's point of view.

March 15th : Mrs Rice attended the evening meeting of the Resident's Association at Ryde Street. Discussed the project and possible ways of helping the group. Agreed to contact Mr. Dent, Humberside Social Services on their behalf on the availability of Club Nexus for them as a Community group. The Association saw themselves as having two roles - self-help and Action.

April : Mrs Rice visited D. Jacques - need to revise goals for the year. The lack of availability of the building and the legalities of the situation, concerning Club Nexus meant that her hopes for developing extra activities in the building would be hard to achieve. It was therefore decided to concentrate on developing a TOY LOAN Library within the Playgroup Library, to encourage parental involvement, and attempts would be made to open up part of an afternoon for this activity.

June : Information received from Mrs Jacques that the Social Services Committee had agreed to apply for Inner City Funding to restore the Club Nexus building for use by Mrs Jacques & Mrs Jackson, also available for community use.

July : Three hundred pounds worth of toys presented to the Playgroup to develop the Toy Library.

4.5 Report by D. Jacques : Supervisor Stepney Lane Playgroup

Stepney Lane Playgroup is now in its ninth year. It is a Social Services group in a very rundown urban area. The building is a prefabricated HORSA hut, which consists of two large playrooms and two toilets and cloakroom facilities for the children. A staff room which doubles as an office and interview room, staff toilet and kitchen completes the plan. To my knowledge this building has been in existence for about forty years.

This playgroup offers forty places per session. However, as the immediate area is due for demolition (new houses are to be built on the site) our numbers have dropped during the last six months and we have an average attendance of twenty six children per session. There are at present thirty-five children on roll compared with seventy six at this time last year. We have a waiting list of some twenty eight children all unfortunately are far too young to attend. The age group is three to five years and some are only just two. It is gratifying to know that people wish to put their children on our waiting list at a very early age.

There are four members of staff, three assistants and a supervisor. We also have a cleaner for ten hours per week. We have a great many placements i.e. Trainee Nursery Nurses, Nurses, Social Workers, Schoolgirls, PCSC students, YOP trainees. We have a Parents Committee which helps to raise money which forms an amenity fund. This provides extras for the children e.g. bus trips, parties, Easter eggs, birthday cards and presents, sweets etc.

Parcels are provided for the elderly in our area at Christmas and the parents are very generous in their giving. Until recently a bingo session was held once a month in the evening, which encouraged the parents and elderly people in the area to meet socially. The staff gave their time voluntarily. Our other activities include jumble sales, clothes parties, coffee mornings which are greatly enjoyed by one and all. Up to last year we held an Autumn Fair which involved a great deal of planning from January to September, but for reasons already mentioned i.e. migration from the area these too have been temporarily discontinued.

The toy library is a totally new venture. As leader of the group I am visiting other toy libraries to observe and see how they are run. I am hoping to gain information and ideas and organise our group accordingly. It is hoped to

interest the parents with a view to handing over the running and organisation to them eventually.

The parent toddler group is at the moment non-existent, again because of people leaving the area and lack of space. We are hoping that the toy library will gain popularity and bring new blood into our other activities at the same time.

The news concerning the HORSA hut opposite our building is encouraging. Work has started on repairing the guttering and plans are afoot to refurbish the building in the near future. The parent toddler group and several new groups may well come into being in the coming months.

Dorothy Jacques
Supervisor

BROADACRE

PARENT/TODDLER

CLUB

COME ALONG AND MEET OTHER PARENTS

HAVE A CUP OF TEA....

PLAY ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

THE CLUB IS FOR YOU AND YOUR TODDLER

WHEN?	EVERY WEDNESDAY MORNING
TIME?	9.30 - 11.30 A.M.
WHERE?	IN THE SCHOOL

LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU THERE

MR COLIN WALKER
HEADMASTER

MRS ANGELA CARPENTER
EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

• • • • • • • • • • •

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE PROJECT

NORTH BRANSHOLME COMMUNITY LUNCH

AT

HIGHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

LOTHIAN WAY

ON

TUESDAY, JUNE 14TH

12.15 - 1.30

Dear Colleague,

You are invited to the Community Lunch to meet other professional workers involved in the North Bransholme Area. We hope this will be the first in a series of Community Lunches which are designed to develop better working relationships and in turn create more awareness and increased understanding of each other's role within the community for the benefit of those families in this area.

Yours sincerely,

Margaret Rice

Patrick Doyle

R.S.V.P. Please call the Headmistress of the School, Mrs. S. Maw, Tel: 835679, if you can come, so that we know the approximate number to cater for.

A DONATION WILL BE ACCEPTED TOWARDS THE COST

THE LUNCH HAS BEEN SPONSORED BY THE NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES PROJECT, FROM A GRANT FROM THE VAN LEER FOUNDATION, WHICH SUPPORTS INNOVATORY PROGRAMMES FOR PARENTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

January 1983

NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE PROJECT : Hull

Visit to:	Highlands Primary School	: Mrs S Maw
	The Dales Primary School	: Mrs J Collinson
	Broadacres Primary School	: Mr C Walker

Highlands Primary School

1. Mrs Maw wants to extend Toy/Book Library meetings - Wednesdays p.m. for children in area not attending the nursery (11/12 children at present)
2. Could expand into Music Room - mother & toddler group and an additional afternoon session might be arranged later on.
3. A Mother's Club - could be a later development.
4. Teachers keen on Toy Library but want to avoid it becoming a child minding service.
5. There is a need for more books.
6. Toy Library - no charge at present (set up with £200)

M. Rice suggestions

1. 10 pence per week per toy and cup of tea - money to be used to buy new toys.
2. Cards similar to library cards for loan system (as in N.H.N. Centre)- could get some printed if required.
3. Mothers could take responsibility for collection of money and the making of tea.
4. A health visitor could pop in - linking into the session
5. Letter to be sent to Education Dept for support for the growth of Toy Libraries.

Information Continued

1. £250 given on 15.12.82 from (Ref. Mr. Stott) Provision for the Under 5's
2. Margaret Crossland - Reception Teacher and Mrs Maw bought toys
3. Toy Library established after Whitsun 1982
4. There is a waiting list for the nursery
5. 3 afternoon visits for children before starting school
6. Most children attending a nursery for only 2 terms (only 4 yr olds)

7. If an early admission policy is implemented, 3 year old children could be taken - facilities available for early admission.

The Future

1. To progress slowly

2. To concentrate on development of Toy loan system

3. Mrs Maw to be involved in Mother/Toddler Club - teachers could be released after 2.30 to help so things progressed.

4. Mrs Maw would like each headteacher to know about what others are doing to enable continuity to be maintained.

5. MR - reference to B. Tizards book "Involving Parents in Primary School"

6. Angela Stones to be asked to send Mrs Maw booklist of good books on Parent Involvement.

Additional Information

Nursery : Mrs Maw and the Nursery teacher would like to develop a parent's area in the present children's cloakroom.

Would need new cloakroom area - possible place already identified - children able to put coat on and have immediate access to play area.

Also by moving gate - access easier into school

- M.Rice asked if this was a possible self-help project

Carpet needed for Music Room - for younger children and toys

Dales Primary School

Mrs Collinson had made contact with Youth Service and discussed the project (M.Rice to contact Trevor Green).

1. Planning permission granted for a hut presently on South Humberside to be placed on Census for use by the schools and community.

2. Mrs Collinson wants 'pop-in' sessions for parents - as an extension of toy library.

3. County Councillor Norman Kendrew on governors

4. Hut - potential building coming September

5. Friends of the Dales - is a loose bonding of committees which provide various activities for the community.

6. J.C. not able to organise Mother/Toddler Club as there is no room. Parent's group would have to be after school.

7. Disco's being organised - 2 a term.

M. Rice Suggestions

1. The hut - need committee before hut opened - need to create a nucleus of interested people.

2. The committee needs a representative from each school

3. Terms of reference of the committee needs investigating

4. Toy Library - Tuesdays 2.45 p.m. (each term for the children about to start school - 12/15 children involved. Suggest 10 pence could be charged + tea - parents to be involved with money and tea making.

5. M. Rice to apply for money for development of Toy Library

6. Liaison with parents - it was suggested that an open meeting be held perhaps focussing on the showing of the video of N.H.N. Centre. The role of the Centre to be explored at a meeting with County Councillor Kendrew.

Broadacres Primary School

1. Colin Walker would like a Mother/Toddler group or nursery - early admissions.
2. There are 2 Youth Clubs for 7-13 years
3. A large area of the school is not used
4. Could have nursery area - toilets and all facilities are available - play area (need small amount of fencing)
5. No Toy Library
6. Need for better lighting and access from the housing estate.
7. Use of hall for community - need good care, has separate entrance
8. Room available for mother & toddlers - would need a small carpet - already have notice board - 20 children on admission register for next two terms.

M. Rice Suggestions

To look at possibility of using the development of a Toy Library as a means to welcome parents of new children.

Possibility of A. Stones linking into initial development as support worker.

Summary

Actions to be taken

1. M.R. to look at possibility of applying for funds from the Education Department to develop Toy Libraries within each school as part of the project.

   The Toy Library seen to be one of the best strategies for developing parental involvement (P.I.) within the school.

   Rationale

   (i) Parents involved with basic organisation - collection of money, recording of toys, mending, making of tea.

   (ii) More pre-school children given the opportunity for some form of pre-school group experience.

   (iii) Parent and child gain confidence in coming to school, identifying with headteacher, teachers and other mothers.

2. M. Rice to make enquiries into the possibility of the Kingston Training Workshop on Sutton Fields to making puzzles for the Toy Libraries, using a grant from the Education Department, if this application was successful.

3. Report to be sent to each head outlining decisions made after each visit.

Other Information

Information needed on : job description of new "hierarchy"
: policy for early admissions
: building programme (nursery) for North Bransholme
: any building around Broadacres/housing policy

To look into possible link-up with Bransholme Senior High School - Child Care Course - helpers at Toy Libraries - possible link up with A. Stones - basic training as helpers.

Awareness of developments within the Social Hall on North Bransholme. Problems already being encountered. Development of a keep-fit club for Mothers on Friday afternoons - attendance on first session 14.1.83 - 12 adults with 7 children (baby - 4 years old) - possible support for a creche. Volunteer girl available.

SECTION 3

1. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN PERSPECTIVE

The active involvement of parents in the education of their children was widely advocated during the late 1960's, 1970's and in the 1980's the pressures are increasing for various reasons - political, educational, consumer influence etc. The origins of this pressure can be traced back to the 1960's when there was a great feeling of optimism that equality of opportunity in education could help to solve many of the society's ills. This euphoria was accompanied by increased expenditure on education and the Social Services and an expanding volume of research about the factors which influence children's achievements at school.

'Social class' was the most significant factor but it was such a composite term and aroused so much controversy that further analysis of influential factors was indicated. (Floud, Halsey and Martin, 1956; Jackson & Marsden 1962; Douglas 1964; Ainsworth 1962; Newson 1963).

Other studies indicated parental influence and attitudes to education were the crucial factors (Bernstein 1971; Plowden 1967; Hess and Shipman 1965; Tough 1976). These developments were paralleled in America, by the hopes pinned on interventionist pre-school programmes such as Head Start to raise the achievement levels of deprived inner city children. Another strand in this expansionist period of education was the increasing importance attached to the early years of childhood. Nursery provision was increased. The Pre-School Playgroup movement was founded in 1962 out of a parent's need for pre-school experience for her child and to fill the gap in the pre-school provision. As a result of the Plowden report Educational Priority area projects were set up in Deptford (London), Liverpool, Birmingham, Dundee and the West Riding of Yorkshire (Halsey 1972; Midwinter 1972 & 1974). The workers in these teams came to believe that only by involving the parents and local community could real progress be made with the children, e.g. Red House home visiting scheme in West Yorkshire, Home Link and Education Shops in Liverpool, Priority areas home visiting scheme in Birmingham.

However by the seventies few of the extravagent claims or hopes had been fulfilled, and education, particularly pre-school education which always

seems to have to justify its existence, was put under the microscope by politicians, educationists and researchers to find out what had 'gone wrong'. It became apparent that when dealing with children from disadvantaged homes often with multiple problems, financial, housing, emotional etc., it was insufficient to 'expose' them to education for a small part of their lives and to expect lasting results in the form of higher motivation and scholastic achievement. The Consortium for Longitudinal Studies in 1979 which studies the long term effects of 12 American pre-school programmes including Head Start stated that "Head Start was built on the assumption that early education, parental involvement and the provision of medical and social services could enable children of low income parents to do as well in school as their middle-class peers and thus help them to leave the ranks of the poor ....."

Many pre-school programmes implicitly contained the following model for social change. Pre-School programmes teach children concrete skills and concepts, but skills and concepts must be built on over the years, so children must also be motivated to continue to learn and achieve in school. They must believe that school is important and possess enough self-confidence to exert the necessary effort. The pre-school experience should also affect the parents so that they may support their children's efforts. With the backing of new abilities, motivations, values and parental support children should be able to compete better with their middle-class peers.

Weikart et al (1978) also showed that parent education and involvement in a pre-school intervention programme produced lasting effects.

In Britain doubts were expressed that 'traditional' nursery education was not offering all that it should to children (Tizard B 1975 & 1977) and the DHSS and DES started to commission research to look at nursery education and develop more effective ways of helping children to develop their full potential.

All these studies, therefore seemed to be pointing towards helping parents to understand and participate more in their children's education. What has happened and does it work? One of the few early attempts to evaluate the effects of providing more information about their children's education was carried out by Young and McGeeney (1968). They found that generally parents welcomed a more equal share in their children's education and were their

attitudes had changed for the better the behaviour of the children at school had improved although improved academic performance developed more slowly and was difficult to measure. Radin (1972) and Karnes (1973) in America found that home visiting and parent support programmes increased mother's IQ's slightly and increased their confidence in handling their children. Radin concluded that involvement can "enhance mother's perception of themselves as educators of their children and of their children as individuals capable of independent thought".

The compatability of this important facet of pre-schooling i.e. enhancing the confidence of parents as educators - with the provision of professionally run nurseries which tend to involve parents, if at all, on their own terms has been debated widely in the last 5 years. Bruner (1980), Barbara Tizard (1975, 1977, 1978), Tizard, Mortimore and Burchell (1982) and Smith (1980) all look analytically at parental involvement in nursery schools and classes and compare it with the spin-off in terms of parental self-confidence generated by pre-school playgroups. All their studies revealed that after a decade of talking about involvement there was very little to show in the way of participation in the education process - more helping on the periphery, although attitudes amongst professionals were generally favourable. A similar picture in primary schools was confirmed in the research by Cyster et al for the NFER (1980). By contrast the PPA at its Annual Conference in 1983 specifically changed its aims from providing play opportunities for young children to "encouraging parents to understand and provide for the needs of their children under statutory age through community groups".

Throughout the literature on nursery/infant schooling and the involvement of parents constant reference is made to the new and extended role expected of practitioners in such a scenario. Teachers, NNEB's and playgroup leaders are expected, along with other professionals such as the Police and Health Visitors to see themselves as 'enablers' for the development of the family rather than as dealing with their former primary subject - the child. This role is a very delicate one and requires special qualities and skills and as yet no recognition is given to them either in intial or in-service training. The dangers inherent in professional 'demonstrating' how to 'talk to or play with your child' are discussed in 2 reports of a home visiting scheme in Scotland (McGail, 1981; Raven 1980).

Some educationalists are worried that this concern about the 'family unit' is distracting teachers and others from children as their primary clients and tempting them to widen their role unrealistically to the detriment of their professional input to children. Also doubts about their role might reduce their effectiveness. Dr. Lilian Katz in an address to the National Children's Bureau in London (TES 14/L1/83) stated that "A profession should spell out its area of expertise. Because immature children need adults in so many ways it is particularly important to set limits to early education. Some teachers are very good at going out to parents but others are not. The question for the profession is should all its members try to learn to do it? Working with parents is another burden and many teachers are overwhelmed by what it can involve. Parents are difficult to help, particularly parents in trouble. If teachers do what is possible with children, wholeheartedly and well they may only be contributing to 20% of the child's development at the time - but that's a lot".

On the other hand some workers are convinced that only this type of commitment will overcome the difficulties faced by some children when faced with 'education'. Several LEA's have tried home visiting schemes (Aplin and Pugh, NCB 1983) but financial constraints have taken their toll of these. The principle behind the new breed of combined nursery centre is essentially parent support and involvement and some primary schools are actively involving parents in reading - with spectacular results (Bellfield School, Rochdale, TES 1983, Hewison et al TES 16/1/81). The burgeoning of mother/toddler clubs attached to schools, nurseries and playgroups is also an indication of the importance some professionals attach to the well-being of the mother as crucial to the progress of the child. In Coventry under the auspices of the Community Education Development Centre many projects concerned with parents are running. These include nursery annexes run by trained mothers under the supervision of nursery staff, courses/discussion groups for parents, educational home visiting etc. The centre has published many useful booklets for parents and teachers.

Two schemes which have evolved even further towards the parent are Home Start, originally in Leicester but now with many copies, and SCOPE started by Lyn Poulton who ran the Red House EPA scheme. Both schemes see the amelioration of family stress as vital to making progress with young children. As education home visitors have found, it is futile to expect a parent to concentrate on playing with their children when the husband is in prison, the electricity has been cut off and there is damp in all the rooms.

SECTION 4.

Working with Parents and Professionals

(i) An Assessment : M. Rice

(ii) Results of the Year
- (a) North Hull Neighbourhood Centre
- (b) The Dales Primary and Highlands Primary School
- (c) Broadacre Primary School
- (d) Stepney Lane Playgroup
- (e) North Bransholme Community Lunch
- (f) Presentation
- (g) Pre-School Holiday Club

(iii) Report of the E.W.O.
- (a) The role of the E.W.O.
- (b) The establishment of the Club
- (c) The future

(iv) Pre-School Learning in the Community
- (a) Quote from 'Strategies for Change' - G.A. Poulton and Terry James
- (b) Flow Chart

SECTION 4

(i) Working with Parents and Professionals

To develop a working relationship with parents means an acceptance, not only of one's strengths and weaknesses, but an awareness of a parent's feelings of adequacy and level of confidence. If one accepts the concept that Pre-school education is concerned with the whole child and to achieve its aims must take account of the child's family and the community of which he is a member"[1], then the professional must learn those skills and techniques which will foster relationships with the child and his family. One of the key words that features in this relationship has to be 'support'. "Support does not mean mild consent; it means the kind of active concern which can only come out of joint activity and a close knowledge by the parents of what schools are doing and why"[2].

Through the school, activities such as the Toy Libraries, Parent-Toddler Clubs can help parents to feel part of the school, have a role to play within these informal activities, with easy access to staff and other parents It is a joint activity. Over a period of time the parent and professional have the chance to build up their knowledge of each other where a mutual concern for the child becomes an on-going link between them. Gains made through this initial contact may extend into other members of the family, younger siblings, neighbours with young children.

'Time' is the second key word. For most professionals 'time' has to be found to develop these activities. It may have to be a question of priorities. For the headteacher it may mean creating time for herself, or a teacher in the school, to have a period of time to develop a Toy Library. It may mean altering the school time-table to allow a school hall to be used for a Parent/ Toddler Club. It may mean holding a Book Library in a corridor or small recess.

Time may have to be spent on support for individual parents when a family problem becomes insurmountable and because of existing relationships, the parent turns to the professional for help:

"The element of support supplies our basic psychological need for self esteem and self direction. It is a nurturing process whereby people are encouraged to make their decisions, to keep control over their own lives, to find mutual help, a sharing of interests and responsibilities as in many family centres, mother-toddler groups, playgroups and playgroup courses"[3].

Working with parents in the community needs new skills and an awareness that a different kind of relationship exists between the two. A wider community role as experienced in the co-ordinator's role has meant a new learning experience. Time and support have featured heavily where shared experiences of working through and developing techniques for organising committee, application for funding, discussions on goals, decisions on building work, has led to many hours of shared learning and growth.
"Learning will only take place if parents are valued for what they are and what they have to offer".[4]

It is the quality of support and the time given to that support that enables a situation of trust and confidence to grow between the parent and the professional, both in the school situation and the community.

The parent with young children is on the threshold of the education system. If the parent, either in a community group or through a Nursery pre-school experience, can come into an environment that not only cares and nurtures and offers creative learning opportunities for the child but also for the parent, then surely this is the most vital time to establish a positive relationship.

Denise Hevey describes the nursery school, playgroups, family centres and Mother/Toddler Clubs that have become "a focal point for young families - places where mothers with young children can meet each other and start building up the informal friendship networks that form the basis of community support. It cannot be over-emphasised that a wide range of provision is essential to meet the widely differing needs of all mothers with children under five, not just those in the pre-school three to five age group."[5]

Working with other professionals also requires the same qualities as working with parents. Time and support again are key words, followed by trust with sensitivity to the practical issues faced in developing and initiating parent child activities within the school. An awareness of one's own problems when fostering parent activities in relation to the other needs of the school, coping with insecurities of staff members, misunderstandings on aims, problems with shared space, conflict with the aggressive parent, support for the more insecure parent has given a wide knowledge and experience that can be shared with other professionals entering into this developing role.

On the positive side is the personal knowledge of gains and the growth in confidence on the part of the parent and recently the professional in a situation

where the opportunity for self growth and support in the group has been maximised through combined parent-professional activities.

This understanding has led to a personal confidence to advise other professionals such as Colin Walker, Headmaster of Broadacre Primary School and Angela Carpenter, the Education Welfare Officer, into an understanding of the growth of self-support and independence that can grow within a group. Sensitivity, availability and a relaxed approach in the initial setting up of the Parent Toddler club have helped to develop a very positive group with an identity established and a growing awareness of their role and an acceptance by the school.

Colin Walker - In Conversation

Broadacre Parent/Toddler Club 1983

(ii) Positive Results this Year

(a) North Hull Neighbourhood Centre

An Open Evening was held at Fifth Avenue Junior High School when 65 people came. The Committee organised the event, making refreshments, arranging for the hire of the hall, sending out invitations. Local politicians, headteachers from local schools, teachers, community workers, as well as a high turnout of representatives of the groups already established, attended the meeting. The video made by the Humberside College of Higher Educetion was shown, which describes the first stages of the Centre.

Trip to the Swimming Baths

Gill and Karen organised another trip to the local baths. The parents travelled by local transport, with their entrance fees paid from the donations taken by Gill and Karen through the club.

Coach Trip

Sill organised a trip for parents and children to Sewerby Park. 22 mothers and 22 children went on the trip.

Transfer to the Horse Hut

The equipment and furniture have been moved out of the 21st Avenue building. Much work needs to be done on the Horse hut but the committee hopes to re-open in October with all the present activities and introduce some new ones. Mrs. Wiley has been the mainstay for negotiating with architects and builders, which she has coped with extremely well.

(b) The Dales Primary and Highlands Primary School

Acquisition of toys to extend the Toy Libraries already established. Growth of the relationship with each headteacher and an awareness of each school within the context of the whole community.
Mutual support, discussion of ideas.
Openness and acceptance of Angela Carpenter as the link professional between the schools, the community and the co-ordinators.
A willingness for a continued involvement next year and interest in developing future parent-child activities and links with the community.

(c) Broadacre Primary School

Development of the Parent/Toddler Club.
Two mothers established as leaders.
Growth in confidence and awareness by Angela Carpenter and her acceptance by the parents.
Developing relationship with Colin Walker - flexible support, encouragement, advice on equipment, organisation of the Club.
Parent leaders growing in confidence, assessing the need to move and talk to different parents and the ability to lead the singing activity at the end of the sessions.
The whole group attended the 'Presentation' at the College, when the children took over the Staff Room.
A visit to the Swimming Baths has been arranged, organised by Mrs. Rice.
Next time, the parents will make their own arrangements.

(d) Stepney Lane Playgroup

Provision of a Toy Library.
Informal meetings during the year.
Contact with the Beverley Road Residents' Association and a knowledge of their problems and needs in terms of a community facility.
Discussions with Senior Social Service Officers about the 'Club Nexus' building.
Knowledge that the Social Services Committee have agreed to restore 'Club Nexus' for use by the playgroup and available to the community.
(Information received July 1983)

(e) North Bransholme Community Lunch

The first one was organised and financially supported by the Project.
Invitations letters were sent out to a variety of workers in different professional and voluntary backgrounds. The list was compiled by Angela Carpenter with help from Mrs. Maw and Denise Smith, the Neighbourhood Worker for Bransholme.
25 people attended the lunch, which took place at the Highlands Primary School at the invitation of Sheila Maw.
The second one was organised by the North Bransholme Community Association. Members of the committee (one even took a day off work) made refreshments with soup and sandwiches. The tables were laid with tablecloths and decorated with attractive pots of flowers. It was attended by 25 people. Denise Smith gave a short account of how the association had developed, and Laurence Wesling gave

an account of the present activities. A useful discussion then took place on the problem of the lack of police cover and the difficulties encountered by some of the residents. The group agreed to invite a police representative to the next meeting.

(f) Presentation

Councillor V. Wilson, Chairman of the Under Fives Committee, officially presented the toys bought through the project to the three headteachers and the playgroup supervisor. Parents and children from the Broadacres Parent/Toddler Club also attended, as well as members of the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre Committee.

(g) Pre-School Holiday Club

The project co-ordinators have been awarded £1,000 to develop a provision for the Under Fives on North Bransholme. Mrs. Rice intends to involve local mothers in the planning, organisation and running of the Club with a paid leader taking responsibility for the total programme. Mrs. Rice intends to monitor the Club and ask the Club Leader to keep a record of activities and problems encountered. As this is the first provision of this kind, it may be possible to use the experience to extend the provision to other estates next year.

Quotations from the following books

[1] Joyce Watt. Co-operation in Pre-School Education. Social Science Research Council, 1977

[2] Central Advisory Council for Education, 1977

[3] National Children's Bureau. Parenting Papers, 5.
Working with Families. Services or Support. Sheila Shinman. 1982

[4] A Job for Life. National Children's Bureau

[5] National Children's Bureau. Parenting Papers, 3.
The Wider Issues of Support or Planning. Denise Hevey, 1982

(iii) Report of E.W.O.

(a) The Role of the E.W.O.

The role of the Education Welfare Officer (E.W.O.) as I have experienced it is very diverse. Enclosed is a diagram *(1) p.77, showing the various paths that may need to be taken as a result of visiting a home of a child absent from school. As a result of the diversity in the role of the E.W.O. I have found that I have built up a very wide network of professional support from all agencies, e.g. schools, police, social services, school health, Hull Council for Voluntary Service, youth service, and many more. I have come to realise that this must put the E.W.O. in a rather unique situation as an excellent liaison officer throughout the community.

With this concept in mind, when I was approached by Mrs. Rice to be part of the Neighbourhood Centre Project which she hoped to initiate at North Bransholme, I felt that I could play a key role in drawing together all parts of the community. I had worked in the area for nearly two years and I had a reasonable understanding of the problems that existed both educationally and socio-economically. I also knew the individual professionals that worked in the area other than the educationalists. I was very enthusiastic with her suggestions and was interested to see if an E.W.O. could extend his/her role successfully within the boundaries of their job.

The role of the E.W.O. has been discussed in great length throughout the country but unfortunately different local authorities view the job with varying expectations. I enclose a statement *2 p.78 which I feel gives a very explicit overall description of the role of the Education Welfare Officer as discussed at Bramley Grange in September 1968.

Within this role, I see the necessity for the E.W.O. to go out to parents especially in S.P.A. areas to encourage and assist them to accept the school and what it has to offer as something that is of great benefit to their children, not something that is an imposition on the family. How often are schools given the excuse that a child has been absent because he needed to buy some new clothes, he was taking his pet to the vet, he had to go on an errand, he has been looking after his mother because she is poorly or because she was up all night with the baby, etc. We must try to educate these parents that they are in fact depriving their children of their great opportunity in their lives to have an education. They often do not realise

that apart from the academic side of school life, the socialising part is so important. It is easy to start a child off on a downward spiral of absenteeism with petty excuses.

Whilst many problems do exist within the home which necessitate the child to assist and not go to school, if we could encourage these parents to use the agencies that provide support and help the child would not need to miss school. If parents can be encouraged to come into the school to see what it provides, they may begin to realise what their child has to gain and possibly there may be some gain for themselves. Hopefully then these petty excuses will gradually fade away and school will be given the priority it demands.

Mrs. Rice's suggestions, therefore, of encouraging parents with pre-school children to come into these schools on North Bransholme and where possible join a group where friendship and an understanding of school could develop appeared to be one way of coming to terms with these problems. This could be the first step towards reducing the present growing problem of truancy. Surely prevention must always be better than the cure.

(b) The establishment of the Club

Once the initial discussions regarding the various stages of the project had taken place, it was decided that I would concentrate on Broadacre Primary School and help Mr. Walker introduce a new Parent/Toddler group on a Wednesday morning. Mr. Walker's attempts at such a group had failed previously. I would also visit and help where possible Mrs. Maw's Toy Loan Library which she was in the process of extending to a Parent/Toddler group on Wednesday afternoons. I would also play the same role with Mrs. Collinson's Toy Loan Library and growing Parent/Toddler group on Tuesday afternoons. Since it was not possible to devote time to each of these developments within my continuing employment as an E.W.O., Wednesday mornings with the new group seemed to be the place where I would concentrate my help and be the most useful.

Mr. Walker distributed some leaflets through his primary school children to those families with younger children. I selected one close which fed primary children into his school. My calls were made the day after the distribution of the leaflets. Already interest was being shown in the area I visited and my personal call answered all the questions and doubts that came to the parents minds. Because of my time restriction, I visited eight

homes in the close. Great enthusiasm was shown and these parents spoke of telling their friends. Yes, they would all come next Wednesday morning. It was felt that a small group would be better to start with rather than large numbers, many of whom may have to be turned away. Mr. Walker felt that his room would accommodate 16 parents, many of whom could bring 2+ children.

I was very anxious that following Wednesday morning because I felt I should have called on more parents but my E.W.O. commitments had not allowed me any further time. It was not possible to judge what the responses would be although I had felt in my conversations with the parents that there was a great need in that area for some pre-school facility for the children.

The morning was a great success. By 10 a.m. nine mothers had come with 12 children, of these only two had not been contacted by me. They had come via Mr. Walker's leaflets and their friends' request. By the end of the second session the group was full. Two mothers were obviously prepared to be seen as leaders. They were prepared to collect the weekly subs to cover refreshment costs and took charge of noting who was coming on a regular basis. Friendships developed within the group of mothers and between the mothers, myself, Mrs. Rice and Mr. Walker. We appeared to have achieved something that was so worthwhile. It was interesting to note that no fathers had accepted the invitation at this stage.

My observation of the group at the end of eight weeks is that it has been a great success, not only for the mothers and their children but also for myself, Mrs. Rice and Mr. Walker. The eight weeks ended with a trip to Haltemprice Swimming Baths. Nine mothers with their children came. Many of these children had never been to a swimming bath before. One mother, who is a young single parent who obviously found it hard to socialise at the beginning of the sessions, had come every week and even came to the swimming baths. She is still very quiet but this has developed into a confident quietness rather than an isolated quietness.

In a conversation with the mother who has emerged as an excellent leader, who is talking now of going to Humberside College of Higher Education in September 1983 to the Pre-School Playgroup Foundation Course.

She said that prior to joining the group she did not know any of the mothers other than that they lived near her. She now had a new close friend and

could feel that the other members of the group were also her friends. Her relative isolation at home had ceased. She felt that this was an experience that they all shared. The group had brought friendship to that part of the housing estate. She said that if anyone had said to her six months ago that she would be part of a group of mums and young children with the possibility of a year's course at a college learning to lead such a group, she would have said they were crazy. Now she is very enthusiastic and says that her husband is supportive of the idea. She has already made arrangements for the care of her younger son while she is at college.

She felt that her relationship with Mr. Walker had improved and that she knew that if she had any problems he would be only too willing to help her out. She felt also that the other mothers and herself looked on Mrs. Rice and myself as friends - to be known as Maggie and Angie. She felt that my first contact with some of the mothers, i.e. the knocking on the doors, was the way they would remember me. I was the person/friend who introduced them to something they did not have before and this something was good and to be looked forward to.

She saw Mrs. Rice as someone who had had experience in setting up groups and had been a very helpful teacher who she could regard as a friend, someone she could always ring and ask for help.

She saw Mrs. Rice, Mr. Walker and myself as supportive. She knew Mrs. Rice would not be available on Wednesdays any more and my commitment would be more limited but she knew that we would be able to help with any problems.

"See you in 6 weeks time" the mums called to me as they left on the last Wednesday before the holiday. This is sufficient to make me feel that I have been part of a project that has brought an interest and a new diversion into these young mothers' lives and they obviously have positive feelings for the future. They have talked during the sessions of what they will do next term, how they will spend the money they have collected each week and what trips to organise. Prior to this group forming these young mothers had no place of meeting or feeling of belonging to the other people in the community. Potential arrangements have been made in case the numbers of the group grows to more than sixteen parents. Mr. Walker has offered his school room for another morning in the week and the overall leader of the group has organised who shall have initial control for that morning.

At the end of this first year of the project I feel that my relationship with Mr. Walker and his staff at Broadacre Primary has developed into one of trust. I feel part of the school and their link with the community. My relationship with Highlands Primary and Dales Primary has also increased. I have got to know the staff involved in the Toy Loan Libraries on a much better level. I have also got to know some of their parents a little but, of course, not on such a level as those mums at Broadacre.

I have learned that it is important to appreciate that because people live in the same socio-economic area they must not be considered as all the same. All these people have something to offer and they have their own sensitivities which must be respected.

I would hope that my involvement with these parents will lead to their acceptance of school as a place where people are friendly and welcoming. I would hope that many of their own childhood experiences of, e.g. a place where parents are kept outside of the school gates, are gradually disappearing. These parents know what I am and what I do 95% of my working day. I would hope that my involvement with them and our bonding relationship will pass on to them the importance of school. Children of school age come to school every day because it is essential for their development and if they do not they will lose out at the end of the day.

My involvement with this project has introduced me to many other people who work and are involved in the various activities at North Prenaholme. The first community lunch held at Highlands Primary and the new summer playscheme for the under 5s, of which I am on the support group, were made much easier because of my knowledge and liaison capabilities with the different agencies and groups involved.

For myself, this year has widened my horizons beyond my expectations. I will admit that I was not sure what and why we were setting up Toy Libraries and Mother and Toddler groups, although I had read about the philosophy behind them. Initially I thought we could have done a lot more a lot quicker. I have learned that each stage much be handled carefully and each stage is a learning process for each person concerned. We must not forget that although our aspirations lead us to believe we are right, we must consult those we are there to help. It must be those people who make their own decisions and we must be there to guide and support. Any group formed must be able eventually to run itself with a professional as a support and not a leader.

This has been borne out with my E.W.O. commitments sometimes clashing with the morning at Broadacre Primary and Mrs. Rice and Mr. Walker being otherwise involved in their respective roles. It is essential that a group is able to cope on its own. This gives that group its own independance and fosters positive feelings of adequacy.

It has been very rewarding to see the ventures we have started progress to such an extent that I feel this must be the right way forward. One observation I have made is that it is essential that at all levels of any project or self help groups those people involved have someone they can turn to for support and advice. My support has come from Mrs. Rice and her expertise in the field of Toy Loan Libraries and Parent Toddler groups. This must be what we started out to do - myself as a field worker with Mrs. Rice in a supportive role. I now feel sufficiently confident to assist another school in such a venture.

(c) The future for E.W.O.s in these areas

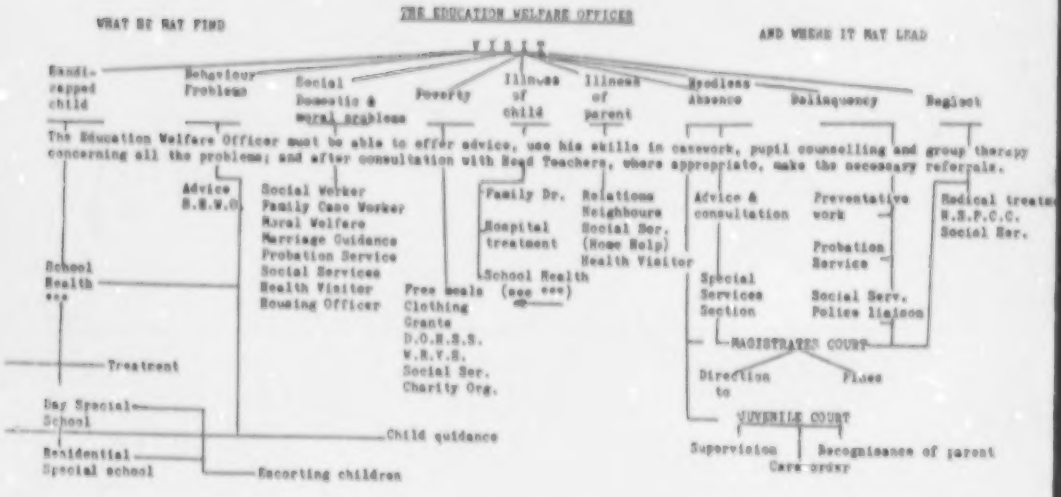
The E.W.O. role has such scope and liaison potential that I feel that he/she should be seen as a vital link between school, the agencies and the community. This is one role that allows a wide network of contact throughout the community and once respected and accepted as a caring agency the education welfare service can be used to its full potential.

There have been times during this year when I have suffered confrontations within myself. What shall I do next? Did I ought to be involved in this project? Educational welfare work is a full time occupation and I was given permission by the Director of Education to be involved with the project in conjunction with my job. However, these time constraints have been worked out with a little reorganisation of my time.

If we are to look forward to a future of full time compulsory education for children between the ages of 5-16 years, it is essential that we cultivate the co-operative parental attitude. Where better to start than with the parents of pre-school children? I feel that it is invaluable that a child starts his education and development with his parents' full support. The research of Tizard, Mortimore and Burchell has shown that children whose parents are involved and interested in their pre-school development have evolved from the education system better equipped than those children whose parents have not been involved.

The E.W.O. could play his/her part in this area by involving themselves as I did with the parents and children in their Toy Loan Libraries and Parent Toddler clubs. This contact and friendship could foster much better relationships within the community for the future.

*1



*2

THE ROLE OF THE EDUCATION WELFARE OFFICER

During a gathering at Bromley Grange, in mid-September 1968, of Education Welfare Officers at which the main theme under discussion was 'Children in Distress', the opportunity was taken to examine the role of the Education Welfare Officer in the changing world of education. Readers of the *Bulletin* may be interested in the following statement which has been drawn up by the National Association of Chief Education Welfare Officers.

The duty of the Local Education Authority, as laid down by the 1944 Act, is to promote the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community. This has been accepted as an abstract concept and the obligations met by the provision of an education system which includes a wide range of academic opportunities, an element of religious instruction, a school health service and a number of provisions for physical and recreational enjoyment. What has not been specifically accepted is that the Local Education Authority has an obligation to assist the socially handicapped child in much the same way as the physically or mentally handicapped.

It is with the socially under-privileged child and his family, the child on whom so many of the Newsom and Plowden recommendations have been focused, that the Education Welfare Service is chiefly concerned.

With this type of child, the central problem is to find ways of awakening parental interest in the child's education and then to encourage and build up an interesting relationship between home and school.

Unfortunately, in so many instances, these homes have no contact with the schools. Speech days, open days, concerts, exhibitions, all fail to attract or arouse interest, and where the need is greatest, the contact is minimal. It is here, where the absence of any home/school relationship is most harmful, that the E.W.O. plays a vital role as the only personal link.

The officer of today is no longer the enforcement officer, but a social worker acting as liaison officer, whose job it is to follow up the symptoms of social deprivation as revealed by the child in school, and to forge the links of a better relationship between parent and teacher.

These symptoms can be irregular attendance, unpunctuality, uncleanliness, inadequate or unsuitable clothing and, within the school situation, behaviour problems, retardation or under-functioning. Whatever the symptom, the cause will probably be found in the home — in the socio-economic environment and parental attitudes towards education. The latter, as Plowden argues, is the more important factor.

Fortunately, environment and parental attitudes can be changed by help, support and advice, and this is where the E.W.O. can bring to bear his knowledge of, and relationship with, the parents of under-privileged children. His contacts built up, possibly, over years of visiting, make him acceptable to the family.

The service starts from the basic assumption that signs of neglect or social handicap are first seen at school. Therefore the closest possible co-ordination between teachers and the E.W.O. is essential.

As for future developments, to function satisfactorily the Education Welfare Service should have, at the very least, one officer to each Secondary School and its contributory Primary Schools — depending, of course, upon the size of the school.

Officers would liaise with the teacher/social worker or some member of the teaching staff deputed for the job. With the establishment of large Comprehensive Schools an arrangement of this kind is essential. The larger the school unit, the greater will be the difficulty in making and maintaining individual contacts unless the right machinery is there to make this possible.

(iv) (a) "Pre-school strategies, while affecting the child and his family profoundly, are also parts of the larger totalities and depend for their success on looking beyond the group to the social, political and education system, both local and national, with which they interact. Pre-school education will have but limited effect on the social or psychological well-being of its customers - the parents and children - unless it takes account of and reaches out to the community to which they belong."

From 'Strategies for Change' - G.A. Poulton & Terry James

(iv) (b) Flow Chart indicating the social, political and education system which Mrs. Rice, in her role as Headteacher of the McMillan Nursery School and Co-ordinator of the North Hull Neighbourhood Centre, has learnt to take account of during the developments within the school and centre.

THE STATUTORY AGENCIES

Explanation of the Target

The Inner Ring shows strategies that schools can undertake to bring parents into the school.

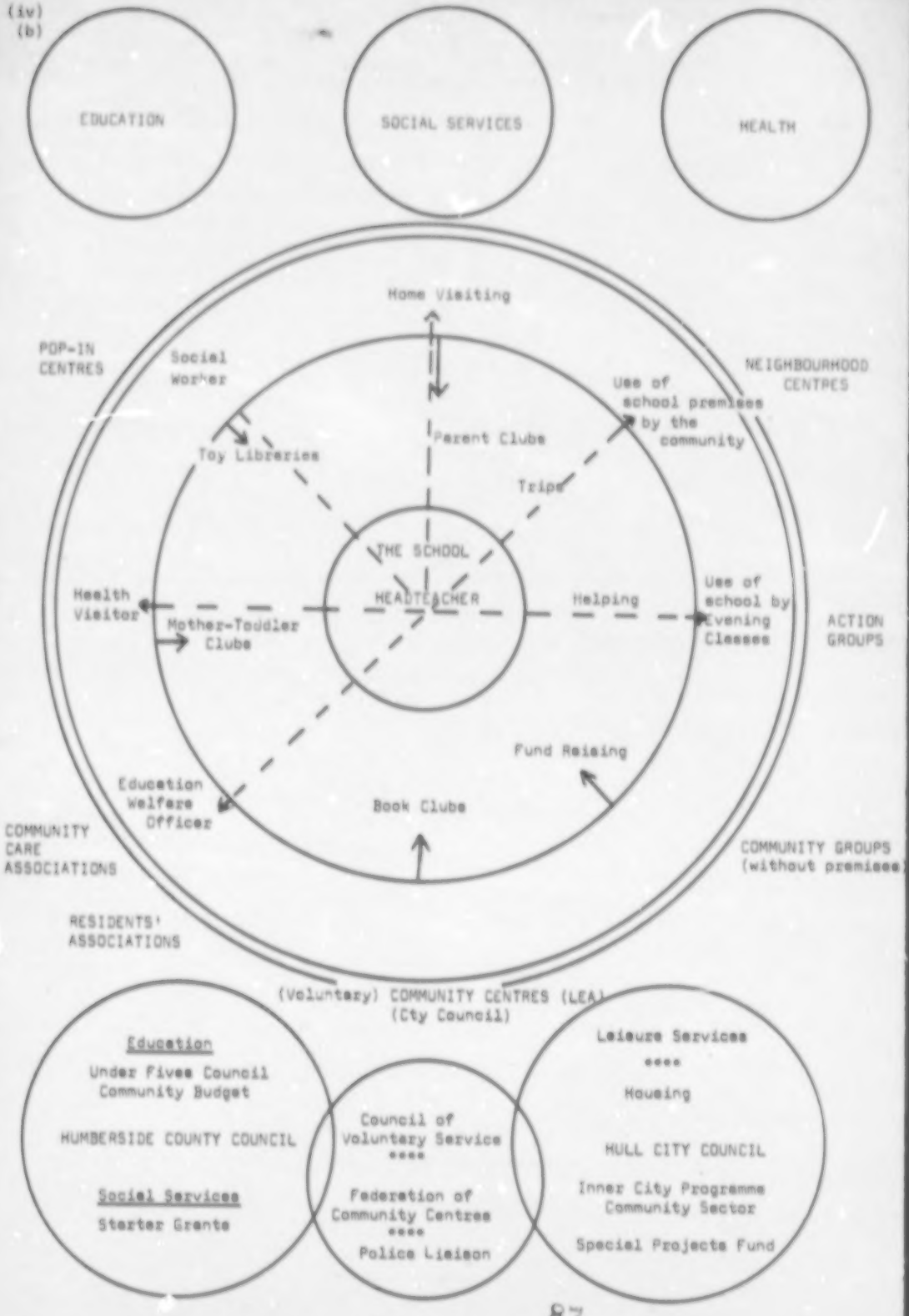
The Second Ring highlights people and resources and programmes that reach out into the Community.

The outside of the Ring indicates various Community Associations and Centres with which the school may have links or combined activities.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Voluntary Agencies

(iv)
(b)


EDUCATION
SOCIAL SERVICES
HEALTH
Home Visiting
POP-IN CENTRES
Social Worker
NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES
Use of school premises by the community
Parent Clubs
Toy Libraries
Trips
THE SCHOOL
HEADTEACHER
Health Visitor
Mother-Toddler Clubs
Helping
Use of school by Evening Classes
ACTION GROUPS
Fund Raising
Education Welfare Officer
Book Clubs
COMMUNITY CARE ASSOCIATIONS
COMMUNITY GROUPS (without premises)
RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS
(Voluntary) COMMUNITY CENTRES (LEA)
(City Council)
Education
Under Fives Council
Community Budget
HUMBERSIDE COUNTY COUNCIL
Social Services
Starter Grants
Council of Voluntary Service
Federation of Community Centres
Police Liaison
Leisure Services
Housing
HULL CITY COUNCIL
Inner City Programme
Community Sector
Special Projects Fund

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SECTION 5.

Development Plan for 1983-1984

(1) Neighbourhood Centre and McMillan Nursery School

(i) Development of Professional Support Group to provide a forum for the inter-change of ideas, common problems faced, so that activities undertaken by the two concerns can be complementary and seek to offer a co-ordinated service for families with young children living in North Hull.

(ii) Support for Co-ordinator and Committee in fostering and extending established group and initiating new ones.

(2) McMillan Nursery School

(i) Development of a Parents' Room/Area (application to be made to the Local Education Authority, under the Director of Education's Special Project Fund 1983/1984).

(ii) Linking in with the Open University Course 'First Years of Life' and 'The Pre-School Child', under the Sponsored Places Scheme. Initial contact made with the Tutor in Charge of Open Universeity.

(iii) Development of regular trips to the Swimming Baths and places of interest with parents and children attending the school, to extend experience for both in terms of social and language development.

(iv) Involvement of parents with the "You and Me" B.B.C. Programme as helpers, who will gradually be encouraged to take part in and plan follow-up language activities.

(3) North Bransholme Primary Schools

Development of a Professional Support Group, co-ordinated by Mrs. A. Carpenter, the Education Welfare Officer involved in Year 1 of the Project. The main aim of the group would be to share information on activities in the area, either within the schools or cummunity and to offer support for each other in fostering parent-child activities. The main input would continue to be on Broadacre Primary School, with Mr. C. Walker, supported by Mrs. Carpenter.

This may lead to another day being offered for the Parent/Toddler Club, extending into a Toy Loan Library. The area of the school presently not used by the children, could be developed into an area where parents could meet for such clubs as Keep Fit or a Sewing Club for parents of children already attending the school. The use of shared use of buildings is presently under consideration by the Local Education Authority and Hull City Council.

(4) The Urban Studies Group

To provide the opportunity for discussion on local initiatives, contributions from outside speakers, who have been involved in programmes concerned with families and young children. By March, the group should be in a position to organise a major conference on various aspects of problems and issues facing urban communities, which have been highlighted by the needs expressed by the members of the group during the past months.

(5) Aspects of Partnership in the Early Years

To arrange two follow-up seminars on topics arising out of the two series of seminars, on the North Bank and the South Bank. The first one is in the process of being organised for October on Counselling and Working with Parents, led by Lin Poulton of S.C.O.P.E. Southampton.

Margaret Rice and Patrick Doyle have been invited to present the work of the first year of the project to a combined gathering of staff from two First Schools and one Secondary in Grimsby. This meeting is at the request of Mrs. Christine Shaw, Headteacher of Strand First School, Grimsby, and one of the seminar leaders of the second series of the course.

(6) Assessment

Each headteacher will make an assessment of the developments within their schools in terms of the extra resources, increased involvement by parents and their own expectations and experience. This assessment will be undertaken in January and a combined report will be made available to the co-ordinators.

Mrs. Jacques will also make a report on the setting up of the Toy Library and its effect on parents and children within the Playgroup.

(7) Evaluation

Paul Widlake of the Community Education Development Centre, Coventry, will be invited to visit the project schools and playgroups in February to assess the work and development within the Project. Arrangements will be made for Mr. Widlake to discuss with each individual Headteacher and groups of parents involved in the different areas the value of the first year of the Project.

SECTION 6.

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